


YOUTH  
WORK PROGRAMS



*Chinsegut Hill*

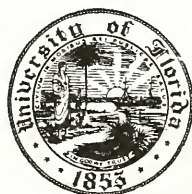


*University of Florida*



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2011 with funding from  
LYRASIS Members and Sloan Foundation

UNIVERSITY  
OF FLORIDA  
LIBRARIES





## YOUTH WORK PROGRAMS

MEMBERS OF  
THE AMERICAN YOUTH COMMISSION

*Appointed by the American Council on Education*

OWEN D. YOUNG, New York  
*Chairman*

HENRY I. HARRIMAN, Boston  
*Vice Chairman*

MIRIAM VAN WATERS, Framingham, Massachusetts  
*Secretary*

WILL W. ALEXANDER, Chicago

CLARENCE A. DYKSTRA, Madison

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER, Arlington, Vermont

WILLARD E. GIVENS, Washington

GEORGE JOHNSON, Washington

MORDECAI W. JOHNSON, Washington

CHESTER H. ROWELL, San Francisco

WILLIAM F. RUSSELL, New York

JOHN W. STUDEBAKER, Washington

HENRY C. TAYLOR, Chicago

MATTHEW WOLL, New York

GEORGE F. ZOOK, Washington

---

FLOYD W. REEVES, *Director*

# YOUTH WORK PROGRAMS

Problems and Policies

BY LEWIS L. LORWIN

*Prepared for*  
*The American Youth Commission*

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

*Washington, D. C., 1941*



COPYRIGHT 1941 BY THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. • PUBLISHED MARCH 1941

Brief parts of this report may be quoted without special permission provided appropriate credit is given. Permission to quote extended passages may be secured through the American Council on Education, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C.

---

## FOREWORD

---

This book opens up a new field of study for those interested in the care and education of youth. It is the first comprehensive attempt to present and discuss the major issues which focus around the operation of a new social institution, the public youth work program.

This is not a definitive study. It is the exact opposite. Although the author makes many stimulating comments and ends his study with a number of positive conclusions and recommendations, he asks many questions for which answers are not yet available, or may be given only in terms of a social philosophy still in process of formulation. The greatest value of the book is in the laying out of the field, the exploration of the frontiers, and the charting of the areas that still remain a no man's land awaiting further investigation.

This discussion of public youth work programs is based on the federal youth work programs now in operation in this country—the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Work Projects Administration (in its employment of persons under 25), and the National Youth Administration. The latter provides material for most of the discussion, since the CCC is limited in scope and the youth employed by the WPA are given little special training which sets them off from the rest of the program. The first draft of the study was completed in the summer of 1940. It has since been revised, and information has been brought up to a more recent date. However, it does not reflect fully the considerable expansion of the NYA out-of-school program which has taken place since the late fall of 1940.

The author, Lewis L. Lorwin, brought to his task maturity of scholarship, breadth of background, and a lifetime of interest in the problems of social welfare. Although best known for his work in the fields of labor economics and economic planning, he has written many books ranging widely over the fields of economics, sociology, and international relations. For ten years Dr. Lorwin was a member of the staff of the Institute of Economics of the Brookings Institution. In 1935 he became economic adviser to the International Labor Office at Geneva, Switzerland, from which he recently returned.

The present report is one of the outcomes of a larger study of the problems of youth employment and unemployment which the Commission initiated a year ago under the direction of Paul T. David, associate director for research. In addition to the present volume and to materials which have been used in statements adopted by the Commission, the study will eventuate in a general report on the employment problems of youth and the extent of the probable future need for public youth work programs. Dr. David was responsible for determining the scope of the present volume and for coordinating this investigation with the other research activities of the Commission.

The American Youth Commission was established in 1935 by the American Council on Education from which it received a mandate to:

1. consider all the needs of youth and appraise the facilities and resources for serving those needs;
2. plan experiments and programs which will be most helpful in solving the problems of youth;
3. popularize and promote desirable plans of action through publications, conferences, and demonstrations.

As in the case of other staff reports prepared for the Commission, the author of the present volume is responsible for the statements which are made; they are not necessarily endorsed by the Commission or by its Director. The Director does take responsibility for the organization of all research projects, the selection of staff, and the approval of staff reports



as meriting publication. The Commission is responsible for the determination of the general areas in which research is conducted under its auspices, and from time to time it adopts and publishes statements which represent specifically its own conclusions and recommendations.

The point of view of the Commission in regard to youth work programs has been progressively clarified in the following statements: *A Program of Action for American Youth*, adopted October 1939; *The Occupational Adjustment of Youth*, adopted April 1940; *The Civilian Conservation Corps*, adopted December 1940; and *Next Steps in National Policy for Youth*, adopted January 1941. The Commission has in preparation a much larger general report in which it will probably deal in more detail with the various issues presented and discussed in the present volume.

FLOYD W. REEVES

*Director*



---

## AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---

In preparing this volume, many officials and members of government agencies and of private organizations, such as the United States Office of Education, the United States Department of Labor, the Bureau of Employment Security of the Social Security Board, the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, and the United States Chamber of Commerce, were interviewed and consulted. The author wishes to thank them for the generous spirit in which they offered their assistance.

It is a great pleasure to acknowledge special indebtedness to the officials of the National Youth Administration, who readily placed their materials and their time at the service of the writer. A large part of the statistical information in the text and in the Appendix was made available by Irving Swerdlow, chief statistician of the National Youth Administration.

Alan Robert Murray, of the American Youth Commission, gave editorial assistance which helped to clarify some of the ideas and also collaborated in the writing of Chapter 8 on "Costs and Administration." Evelyn Fisher rendered efficient help in the collection of materials and data. Tables I, III to VII, XXII, and XXIII in the Appendix were compiled by Arthur Wubnig.

Although the author accepts full responsibility for the statements of fact and opinion which appear in the following pages, the volume owes much to the valuable criticism and suggestions of members of the American Youth Commission and of a num-



ber of consultants who were kind enough to read an earlier draft which was circulated in mimeographed form. The comments received were very helpful in the completion of the volume in its present form.

LEWIS L. LORWIN

---

# CONTENTS

---

	PAGE
Foreword . . . . .	v
Author's Acknowledgments . . . . .	ix
1. What This Study Is . . . . .	1
2. Basic Concepts and Objectives of Youth Work Programs . . . . .	6
3. Whom Should the Program Serve? . . . . .	25
4. What Work Should Youth Do? . . . . .	49
5. Wages, Employment, and Social Policy . . . . .	84
6. Relations with Employers and Organized Labor . . . . .	104
7. Effects of National Defense . . . . .	118
8. Costs and Administration . . . . .	127
9. Conclusions and Suggestions . . . . .	146
Appendix . . . . .	155
List of Tables in the Text . . . . .	185
List of Tables in the Appendix . . . . .	187
Index . . . . .	191





---

# 1

## WHAT THIS STUDY IS

---

FOR MORE than seven years now, government youth work programs have been an increasingly important element of our social-economic experience and an issue of national policy. The four federal youth work programs now in operation—the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Work Projects Administration (in its employment of individuals under 25), the National Youth Administration student work projects, and its out-of-school work projects—are currently providing financial aid, work, and some measure of training to well over a million and a quarter young people, with the likelihood that this figure may be increased in the near future. Indeed, in October 1939, the American Youth Commission definitely recommended that employment under public auspices in some form of service be provided for every young person needing it, which might easily raise the total by a million or more.<sup>1</sup>

Despite all this growth, it cannot be said that a government youth work program has become a fully accepted part of “the American way” of doing things. The place of a publicly operated work program in the life of American youth and its relation to general social-economic policies are still far from clear. There are differences of opinion as to the need for such a program in the near future and as to its content if it be continued.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> See *A Program of Action for American Youth* (Washington: American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, 1939).

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, House Committee on Appropriations, 76th Cong., 3d sess., *Department of Labor—Federal Security Agency Appropriation Bill for 1941, Hearings . . . February and March, 1940* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), Pt. 2, pp. 56-246, 562-659.

The present study is concerned with the problems and policies involved in such a program, and it attempts to suggest the lines along which a youth work program might be developed. The questions raised are: What is or should be its main purpose? For what youth should it be? On what principles should work projects be based—social use, or training value, or both? How should they be planned and organized? How extensive should the program be? What should it render to the participants in the form of wages, training, and social welfare? How can it be adjusted to the programs of social groups having similar aims and to the activities of related social institutions, for example, the public school system?

It should be made clear that the present study is in no sense an account or analysis of the historical conditions which underlie current youth work programs; nor is it an estimate of the extent to which these conditions may persist in the future. The data for testing the validity of the assumptions on which the need for a public youth work program is based—data bearing on changes in the composition of the working population, in technology, in the labor requirements of industry, and in employment relations—are given in another report of the American Youth Commission, now in preparation. Although some of the economic and social implications of the argument for a public youth work program are touched upon in the following pages, the need of such a program is here taken for granted.

Moreover, the present study must not be considered an appraisal of current programs or a critique of their past and present operations. Such a study of the Civilian Conservation Corps, of the resident centers of the National Youth Administration, and of private work camps in the United States has been made over the period of the last five years by the staff of the American Youth Commission, and several reports embodying its findings are now in process of publication. In view of recent and current discussion, an evaluation of the experience of the youth work programs now in operation will be of considerable interest. To what extent, for instance, have these programs given economic relief to the youth of the country; what effects has such relief

had on the young people aided? Of what value have the work programs been in helping young persons to adjust themselves to the employment situation which has confronted them? Has the experience proved the desirability of youth programs conducted on a mixed relief and work basis? Has it developed methods for dealing with the training of young persons? The present study touches upon these questions but is not primarily concerned with them.

For purposes of illustration, and to indicate concretely the nature of the problems considered, this report has drawn liberally upon the experience of the NYA out-of-school projects. As is well known, this part of the program of the NYA was designed for young persons between 18 and 24, inclusive, who are out of school and unemployed.<sup>3</sup> It has the double purpose of giving the aided youth some paid work through part-time jobs and of providing through these jobs work experience and some vocational and academic training<sup>4</sup> intended to aid the young participants in finding steady employment in private industry more easily. In 1935-40, the NYA spent on this program a total of about \$200,000,000, nearly two-thirds of the total funds allotted for all NYA activities. It is now giving work and financial aid through these projects to about 224,000 young people,<sup>5</sup> and in the last five years has aided a total of more than a million and a quarter different junior workers. The program is on a national scale, being carried on in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico; projects are conducted in about 2,900 of the 3,072 counties in the continental United States.

The out-of-school work projects of the NYA have been selected for discussion here for several reasons. Of the four

---

<sup>3</sup> Since the expansion of the program starting in the late fall of 1940, exemptions to authorize employment of youth aged 16 and 17 have been made in some states.

<sup>4</sup> A change in this respect was made in August 1940, in accordance with the provision in the First Supplemental Civil Functions Appropriation Act of 1941. See Chapter 4, p. 65.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix Table XVII, p. 170, which gives the latest statement of employment by type of project available when this study was completed in October 1940. Shortly thereafter the out-of-school program was greatly expanded; in February 1941 it included more than 485,000 youth.

federal youth work programs now in operation, this is the least limited in scope and the most flexible in possibilities. The CCC necessarily affords limited types of work experience to its enrollees and limited facilities for education and vocational training. The WPA is not designed to offer any but incidental training. The NYA student work projects are restricted to young people in schools and colleges. Only the out-of-school projects of the NYA are free from these limitations.

They are open to both young men and young women. They can combine work, work experience, vocational training, and academic education to any desired extent. They include resident centers, in which the participants live, and local projects, with the participants living at home. The work projects may be chosen from a wide range of possibilities. The educational program lends itself to integration with existing local public educational institutions. It is for these reasons that in the probable expansion of youth work programs in the near future, the NYA out-of-school projects are expected to be the principal units for further growth.

Thus, the main question here discussed is: *Granting the need for and value of a public youth work program, what should be its purpose and character and how should it be planned and carried out?* Owing to the magnitude of their operations, to the character of their aims, and to the nature of their methods, the programs of today are a potent factor in the public effort to shape the occupational, economic, and social opportunities of large numbers of American youth. What can we reasonably expect of these programs in the future?

The problems selected are those which have caused most discussion in the past and which are the center of public attention today. The policies considered are those which have had some trial in experience, but whose development calls for further study and research. The method of presentation is to restate current ideas on the subject so as to clarify their similarities and differences, to sum up some of the practical experience bearing on the issues discussed, and to consider some of the general social-economic data bearing on present and prospective policy. All

references to the NYA should be viewed in the light of this procedure, as illustrative or as indicating a point of departure, and not as final judgments or appraisals. This is particularly important because data concerning the NYA are based only in part on a firsthand study of its administration and its resident centers, and to a much larger extent on statements issued by the NYA itself.

It is clear that this study should be regarded not as definitive but as exploratory and suggestive of a large and interesting field for further cultivation. If the reader becomes more fully aware of the social and economic implications of public youth work programs, this study will have accomplished its aim.

---

## 2

# BASIC CONCEPTS AND OBJECTIVES OF YOUTH WORK PROGRAMS

---

ON DECEMBER 4, 1928, President Calvin Coolidge sent to the Seventieth Congress, opening its second session, a message which began:

No Congress of the United States ever assembled, on surveying the state of the Union, has met with a more pleasing prospect than that which appears at the present time. In the domestic field there is tranquillity and contentment, harmonious relations between management and wage earner, freedom from industrial strife, and the highest record of years of prosperity. In the foreign field there is peace, the good will which comes from mutual understanding, and the knowledge that the problems which a short time ago appeared so ominous are yielding to the touch of manifest friendship. The great wealth created by our enterprise and industry, and saved by our economy, has had the widest distribution among our own people, and has gone out in a steady stream to serve the charity and business of the world. The requirements of existence have passed beyond the standard of necessity into the region of luxury. Enlarging production is consumed by an increasing demand at home and an expanding commerce abroad. The country can regard the present with satisfaction and anticipate the future with optimism.<sup>1</sup>

A statement of this kind, bringing with it vivid memories of other features of the depression that was then already lurking around the corner, serves to build a background illustrating how deep-seated are the changes in national thinking since that time. The words read as if they came from not another era but another world, certainly a sweeter and brighter one than the world we know. Yet the same people, to a great extent, who inhabited that world, illusory as it may have been, live in the world of

---

<sup>1</sup> This was the opening paragraph of the message. See *Congressional Record*, December 4, 1928 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1928), Vol. 70, Pt. 1, p. 20.



today, and have had to adjust themselves to it. Among them are several million young people ranging in age from 4 to 13 when President Coolidge wrote his message and now forming the group of out-of-school, unemployed youth whose problems have led to public youth work programs.

Broadly speaking, the American economic world of today is one in which a sufficient quantity of food, of clothing, and of materials for shelter, comforts, and luxuries to keep the entire population from starvation and to maintain portions of the population in varying degrees of affluence can be produced by several million fewer individuals than the number able and willing to engage in productive work. While such a condition might conceivably be hailed as the crowning advance of modern civilization—a fitting climax to the splendid condition described by President Coolidge—it has instead turned out to be the major social and economic problem of our time.

We thus have the unfortunate fact that the several million individuals just mentioned are not given an opportunity to make their contribution to a larger national output, and that at the same time they and their dependents are able to share in the consumption of what has been produced only with the aid of some form of division of the production of the rest of the population. Furthermore, no satisfactory method has yet been worked out for such a division. Informal division within families is far from sufficient; private charity is not great enough to cope with the problem. The relief bureaus of local and state governments have been unable to supply the demand. Even the intervention of the national government, which since 1933 has had to supplement these other efforts, has been far from successful in establishing an effective method for sharing nationally the burdens of economic depression or the advances of technical gain.

Still, the necessity of giving emergency relief and the concern with the question of what to do with the productive capacity of the unemployed have had profound effects on our economic thinking and social policy. Out of this necessity was born the general idea that the national government was responsible not only for relieving emergency distress but also for aiding economic

activities when necessary by using its powers of taxation and its control over currency and credit, so as to help sustain and secure a living minimum for all of the people all of the time.

In this particular form, the idea is certainly new to American thought. Its rise dates only from the years 1929-33, and its persistence has been bound up with the continuing large volume of unemployment and economic distress. But in its deeper implications it stems from the general democratic outlook which has guided American political development from the very beginning. One of the basic innovations in human relations that accompanied the democratic form of government in America, as elsewhere, was the idea that the economic powers of government, including those of taxation, should be used for the common benefit of the social group as a whole.

In recent years it also became clear that the "general welfare" can be promoted in practice only through ever larger agencies of government. At the height of the depression in 1933 such public activities as public assistance were conducted and financed by local, county, and state governmental units. But because economic distress was so much greater in certain parts of the country than in others that people were in imminent danger of starvation unless outside aid were furnished, the national government assumed the responsibility for providing funds to maintain at least a subsistence standard in every community.

It is this recent development that has given shape to our national policy with regard to improving standards of living today. This policy may be said to be predicated on the premise that, while we maintain a system of private enterprise, we must apply to it governmental correctives to offset the tendency of the system to reduce large groups of the population to living standards below those which are socially acceptable. Our policy is thus not merely an attempt to mitigate poverty but a broad movement to set rules to which private enterprise must conform in order to assure that its operations serve the public interest. Concretely this general policy is being pursued along the following main lines.

1. Conservation, the purpose of which is to maintain and improve natural and human resources.

2. Education, including vocational guidance and technical training.

3. Employment, concerned with placement, labor standards, wages and hours, and industrial relations.

4. Social security, including unemployment compensation, sickness and old age insurance, and public assistance.

5. Social consumption, to enhance human living by improving nutrition, health, housing, and recreation.

6. Developmental efforts to promote balanced economic growth as a basis for higher standards of living (including power development, business cycle policy, trade policies, rehabilitation of "problem areas," population resettlement, and so forth).

7. Citizenship, aiming to strengthen the sense of national unity and of social solidarity. Citizenship policies have a bearing on the raising of living standards, particularly since differences in regional and group levels of living tend to harden and to become accepted as natural or inevitable. Part of the task of social readjustment today is to bring home to various sections and groups of the American people that, just as we achieved political unity by 1865 and forged economic unity in the half century that followed, so we must now develop social unity as a basic element of national life.

Because the youth group has formed such a large proportion (about 30 per cent) of the unemployed, a public youth work program has been among the chief procedures in the application of the policies sketched above. The first of all the agencies set up by the national government in 1933 was the Civilian Conservation Corps, offering direct aid, through a camp work program, to young men throughout the country. Shortly thereafter the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, which preceded the Work Projects Administration, began a student work program. In June 1935, the National Youth Administration was organized, taking over the FERA student program and creating in addition its out-of-school work projects. The NYA program

developed from year to year, forming a prominent part of national work-relief activities.

The present out-of-school youth work program, therefore, is complex both in its origins and in its objectives. It may be clarified, however, by distinguishing its essential elements. In broad outline, three general concepts underlie current discussions of the purposes and scope of a public youth aid program. First, such a program is thought of as an emergency work-relief measure. There is, second, the idea of making it part of an educational-vocational-employment system. And, third, it is visualized as an element in a larger scheme of social welfare or social-economic reconstruction.<sup>2</sup> A brief statement of these three points of view is a first step in the discussion of the problems with which this study is concerned.

#### AN EMERGENCY WORK-RELIEF MEASURE

This viewpoint is influenced by the considerations that have led to relief and work-relief programs, not alone for youth but for the unemployed in general.<sup>3</sup> But its added argument is that young people who are out of school and unemployed have peculiar problems calling for special methods of treatment which are not provided in ordinary employment assistance. As first entrants into the labor market or as beginners and learners in industry, they need besides elementary economic security some direction in their choice of occupation and some training in the requisites of effective workmanship. As in the case of older workers, it is preferable, despite higher costs, to provide assistance to young

---

<sup>2</sup> As a result of recent events, these three concepts have been modified by the idea of national defense in its relation to national economy. This aspect of the problem is considered in Chapter 7.

<sup>3</sup> It is not necessary to enter here into a detailed discussion of these considerations. Briefly, direct relief is advocated as the least expensive and most direct method of aiding the victims of industrial depression and of promoting the re-establishment of "normal" conditions. Such a relief program is expected to call for the lowest possible expenditures by the government. On the other hand, work relief is advocated on the grounds that, though more expensive, it helps to conserve work habits and human values, that it results in completed projects which have economic and social value, and that the purchasing power given to those employed on work projects creates directly and indirectly an added stimulus for recovery.

unemployed workers in the form of work relief. An additional reason is that, by doing useful work for the payments received, the unemployed youth may maintain and strengthen habits of work and acquire work experience and some realistic on-the-job training which may aid them in finding and holding jobs in private industry, as well as in keeping their self-respect and their faith in the future.

In this view, the "youth problem" can be "summed up in one word—jobs."<sup>4</sup> The magnitude of the problem is indicated by quoting the figure of 4,000,000 unemployed youth between the ages of 16 and 24, inclusive, given by the special census of employment and unemployment in 1937. The urgency of the problem lies in its tendency to become a "normal" feature of industrial life, owing to the presumed fact that young persons are being more and more affected in special ways by cyclical, structural, and technological unemployment.

It is claimed by the exponents of this view that during downward swings of business, young workers are often among the first to be laid off, while during the upward swings, they are among the last to be taken on again. This is due to both economic and social reasons, such as the greater value of older workers to firms trying to maintain a working force, seniority rules prevailing in industry, traditional personnel policies, and the regard of employers for the greater social responsibilities of older workers. Not only severe depressions, such as that of 1929-33, but also less acute recessions are thus bound to leave in their trail large numbers of unemployed young persons who may not be fully reabsorbed by industry on its upward grade, even though new industries may hire young workers in many cases.

In this view, a large volume of youth unemployment is thus likely to recur in the years to come, assuming no basic change in economic policy and barring the temporary effects of national defense. Consequently, a youth work program must be planned to meet such recurrent "emergencies." And it must stress as its

---

<sup>4</sup> See "Youth," *Fortune*, XXI (May 1940), 89.



objectives not only relief but also its value to youth in providing training.

Although a public youth work program according to this view involves more than giving relief to young people, in practice the belief held by many people that such a program is primarily an emergency relief measure has tended to color, if not to control, the administration of such agencies as the CCC, WPA, and NYA. The resulting emphasis on the relief content of youth work agencies has affected their operation in numerous ways, including selection of participants, wages paid, work projects executed, training given, and total numbers aided. Thus, the view of emergency relief as the sole basis of a program has been influential in limiting the extent of current programs and in determining indirectly their procedures. Were this attitude to become the sole basis of a youth work program, it would exclude a major portion of the activities of current youth work programs, for it clashes sharply with their larger purposes and scope.

#### AN ELEMENT IN AN EDUCATIONAL-VOCATIONAL SYSTEM

The second concept was formulated in the Report of the President's Advisory Committee on Education in 1938.<sup>5</sup> It has been elaborated since in a number of studies and reports by national educational organizations, including the American Youth Commission.

From this point of view, the essential function of a youth work program is to help "bridge the gap between school and employment." In any economic system there are social provisions for

---

<sup>5</sup> The Advisory Committee on Education was appointed by the President of the United States on September 19, 1936. Its initial assignment was to make a study of the experience under the existing program of federal aid for vocational education, the relation of such training to general education and to prevailing economic and social conditions, and the extent of the need for an expanded program. It was at first known as the President's Committee on Vocational Education. In a letter dated April 19, 1937, the President enlarged the functions of the committee to consideration of the whole subject of federal relationship to education. On February 18, 1938, the Committee submitted to the President a comprehensive report in which a general educational and vocational policy was outlined. On February 23, 1938, the President transmitted the report to Congress.



aiding youth to find a place for themselves in productive life. Until recently our facilities for "inducting youth into the channels of employment" were more or less effective, but in recent years, as a result of changes in our social and economic conditions, they have become inadequate, and it is necessary to find new ways toward the same end.

The most important aspect of the situation, in this view, is that young people under 21 are said to find it increasingly difficult to secure employment, owing to the new attitudes of employers.<sup>6</sup> Many factors are responsible for this new condition, but of greatest influence, presumably, are changes in the age composition of the population which have increased the proportion of employable adults; changes in social ideas which tend to raise the minimum age for entering industry; and changes in industrial technique which are modifying the character of the demand for labor. Industry today, it is claimed, calls for a wider general education, for a greater familiarity with mechanical and technical processes, and for a higher level of personal qualifications.

It does not seem possible, at least for some time to come, to modify demographic and social trends. The way to help youth in their difficulties thus lies along educational and vocational lines. Since youth are forced to enter industry at a later age, it is necessary to enable them to stay in school by making the school programs more interesting and useful and by providing the economic means for those who do not have them. On the other hand, it is necessary to link general education with vocational training and with work experience so as to prepare the youth more effectively for the transition from the school to the workshop.

The emphasis in this concept is thus not on cyclical factors in

---

<sup>6</sup> See Homer P. Rainey, "What Is the American Youth Problem?" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, CXIV (November 1937), 18-24. See also Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story* (Washington: American Council on Education, 1938); Homer P. Rainey and others, *How Fare American Youth?* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1937); and Harl R. Douglass, *Secondary Education for Youth in Modern America* (Washington: American Council on Education, 1937). Also *Education and Economic Well-Being in American Democracy* (Washington: Educational Policies Commission, 1940).

economic activity but on long-term trends which are affecting the demand for labor. Industry is, to a large extent, catching up with social advance in so far as it is adjusting itself to the "prolongation of childhood" and to the need for the conservation of human resources. It is the task of the educational system to readjust itself to these trends in its own way.

The task is not a mechanical but an organic one. General and vocational education cannot be kept apart, especially at the secondary school level and after. Technical training must be woven into the scheme of education; vocational guidance must be supplied to adjust individual aptitudes to occupational needs; placement service should be devised to bridge the gap between the end of school and the beginning of work; and methods must be improved for advancement of young workers on the job. This is the general goal, stated in its widest possibilities, to which a program of action must be geared in accordance with available means.

Despite the progress made in recent decades, the exponents of this view hold that the schools cannot give the youth of the country the training and experience implied in the new demands of industry. Nor are they likely to be able to do so for some time to come. Industry, in its turn, cannot assume the task, partly because of its organizational make-up, partly because of the expense. The inevitable result is that, even if business were to experience a general recovery in the near future, large numbers of the youth of the country would find themselves knocking in vain at the doors of our industrial establishments. Employers would find it more expedient to hire more seasoned persons and to tap sources of labor among older groups, leaving those in the younger age groups to shift as best they can until they find their proper place in the productive system.

The need for and place of a public youth work program, according to this view, are thus clear. What youth needs and what should be provided for in a general educational scheme are not only technical instruction but work experience and training in the habits and attitudes which spring from doing useful work and from being paid for work done. This sort of experience

is now given in various trades to apprentices. But the number of apprentices is small. Neither are the vocational schools adequate for the purpose. For the mass of young persons who wish to enter industry, or who are unable to do so now, the need can be filled only through a youth work program, financed out of public funds and administered by a special agency, which in cooperation with the schools, the public employment offices, and private industry would fill the gap between the last days of school and the first days of work and link the first steps in earning with continued learning.

In this concept the emergency aspects of a youth work program are of secondary or little importance. If an emergency business situation continues, that merely adds point to the argument. But the main reasons for the program are the general industrial and economic changes of our time and the need for fitting the educational and vocational institutions to these trends. The main objective, in this view, is that of training youth for work in a concrete and practical way, through direct experience on paid jobs, and of aiding them in the transition from such training to self-supporting positions in the employment system of the country.

#### A FACTOR IN A PROGRAM OF SOCIAL WELFARE

Another way of looking at youth work programs is to regard them as an integral part of a general program of social-economic reform. This point of view has not been expressed in definite form, but can be pieced together from current statements on the subject. It has had an important influence on formulations of the "youth problem" and on educational thought in general.

The basic premise of this concept is that both the unemployment and employment problems of youth are merely special aspects of the problem of poverty. And today, as in previous periods, though personal failings and maladjustments are serious causes of poverty, they are far less important than social and economic factors. The greater part of the young people who are in need of relief and of vocational assistance are children of "underprivileged" groups of the population whose condition is

traceable to environmental influences. Large numbers among the needy and unemployed youth of today are victims of malnutrition in childhood, of lack of adequate schooling, of meager cultural opportunities at home, and of a generally low level of living. The results of these conditions are registered in their bad health, their insufficient education, their lack of technical and vocational preparation, and their incapacity to remedy their situation by their own efforts.

The prolonged depression of recent years, like every previous business depression, has hurled large numbers of the formerly well-to-do into the depths of destitution. It is also true that recent economic trends have blocked the path to employment for many young persons who have had the benefit of adequate living and education. But the fact remains that in their widest incidence, the employment problems of most unemployed youth today stem from conditions of poverty in which those youth have had their life.

Despite recent advances in living standards, it is doubtful whether the extent of poverty today is less than it was two or three decades ago. In so far as poverty is a relative term and may be measured from a given line taken as a minimum, the advance of economic and social standards may result in moving the minimum level upward, thus leaving the same or even a larger proportion of the population at or below the accepted "poverty level." Before 1914, American students of poverty spoke of "the submerged tenth";<sup>7</sup> today, the concern is with "one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished."<sup>8</sup> Also, recent economic and social developments have impressed a new

---

<sup>7</sup> The United States Commissioner of Labor stated in 1894 that the population of slum districts of the 16 largest cities of the country constituted, "at the least calculation," 10 per cent of the total population of those cities. See *The Slums of Baltimore, Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia, Seventh Report of the Commissioner of Labor* (Washington: U. S. Bureau of Labor, 1894). See also Thomas S. Adams and Helen L. Sumner, *Labor Problems* (8th ed.; New York: Macmillan Co., 1914), p. 150.

<sup>8</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Second Inaugural Address," *Congressional Record*, January 21, 1937 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1937), Vol. 81, Pt. 1, p. 317.

stamp upon poverty. We now have many "new poor" in the shape of sharecroppers and tenant farmers; "Okies" and "Arkies"; "stranded populations" and "problem area" inhabitants; the "worker over forty" and the "unemployed under twenty"; and so on. Both the continued magnitude of the problem and its new forms, especially in so far as youth are involved, demand new devices and measures.

The remedies for the situation must be sought along two lines. First, policies must be devised for real equality of educational and economic opportunity in the near future. Second, means must be provided to aid the youth of today to offset the effects of the deficiencies of the past. By supplying work and income to the youth and by other measures of social welfare, the health of the youth may be improved, their morale strengthened, and their efforts to make the most of themselves in industry and in society generally reinforced.

A youth work program in this view is thus a method for equalizing economic opportunities for youth and for improving living standards generally. It may be particularly needed in times of business depression and emergency, when unemployment is especially widespread. But it should be regarded as a permanent factor in dealing with poverty as long as poverty remains a problem. In view of some of the conditions which make for poverty today, a youth program should be linked with other programs of social-economic reconstruction, namely, the conservation of land, the resettlement of surplus populations, the protection of public health, and the provision of larger facilities for recreation. In brief, it should be geared both to a public works policy and to schemes for general social-economic development.

#### CHARACTER OF CURRENT PROGRAMS

The youth work programs in operation today, under the direction of the national government, do not embody exclusively any one of the three concepts outlined above. These programs are rather mixed in character. The CCC and the student work and the out-of-school work programs of the NYA are, to a large



extent, emergency work-relief programs; but they are also shot through with vocational considerations and with ideas of social reform. The WPA is nearest to being a straight work-relief program.

The CCC, for instance, enlists the interests and energies of unemployed youth in the conservation of natural resources. It thus has the merit of tying in the major part of its work with a long-range national program. It is, however, limited in scope. The work experience and training which conservation work can supply are not extensive or sufficiently varied. The occupational outlook in the field is not wide. The fact that the camps separate the boys from urban associations and opportunities is a hampering factor in preparing them for private employment. Camps cannot be readily provided for girls. For these and other reasons, it would seem that, while the CCC can and may be expanded, such expansion will not serve some of the larger purposes of a youth work program.

The student work program of the NYA may be regarded primarily as a means of equalizing educational opportunities. Though the financial aid it provides to boys and girls in high schools, colleges, and universities is small, it is a help to those who have the energy and the will to stay in school. At the end of the academic year 1939-40, the program was giving aid to about 350,000 high school boys and girls, 125,000 college students, and 3,000 students doing graduate work. (See Table 1, p. 26.) If funds were at hand, it could be enlarged. The program undoubtedly influences to some extent choice of occupation and economic opportunity of the youth aided, but, in its present form, it is not coordinated either with a properly developed vocational plan or with a general program of social welfare.

The out-of-school work program of the NYA rests on three general premises. The first is that relief must be given to needy young persons of working age who are out of school and unemployed. In so far as the aid given to the young people may be used in the support of the entire family, it is an indirect addition to general relief. In so far as it is given to the young per-

sons independently of how it may be used, it establishes a special relief group.

Second, the NYA proceeds on the idea that work relief, though more costly, is preferable to direct or outright relief, especially in the case of young persons who have to make their transition from school to employment. The work projects are thus designed to give part-time employment and the aid is extended in the form of wages paid for work done.

Third, in planning its work projects, the NYA has aimed to attain two ends at once. The projects must be of use to the community in which they are undertaken and carried out. At the same time, they must provide work experience and training to the employed youth so as to enhance their "employability." At present, projects are also being planned to tie in with the needs of national defense.

While limited by the act under which it operates, the NYA has shaped its activities, in large measure, by its own conception of its tasks and opportunities in relation to the "youth problem" in general. This conception is social-economic in character. Thus, while aiming to aid "needy" young persons between the ages of 18 and 24 years, inclusive, the NYA no longer insists on selecting them from families on relief. Any young person within the age group specified is entitled to aid if he or she cannot find a job and is a member of a family whose income is insufficient for basic needs. The criterion thus tends to be not certification for relief but being in a deficiency-income group. While most of the projects sponsored by the NYA can hardly do more than supply "work experience," a number of these projects are said to provide at least sufficient training for "induction into industry." Also, while limited by the act under which it operates, the NYA is animated by a deep social-reformist attitude.

In practice, the NYA is thus marked by a duality of aims and methods. On the one hand, it is an agency of relief whose special task is to bring aid to young persons in economic distress. The NYA cannot divest itself of this feature, both because there is still widespread need for relief and because its relief functions have been its main *raison d'être* in the eyes of



many voters whose opinions affect members of Congress. On the other hand, it is an agency of social-economic readjustment aiming to guide young persons in finding a place for themselves in the productive system. Its social-economic character is due to its own effort to break through the narrow limits of relief and to meet the underlying problems. As a result, the NYA, while influenced by all of the three general concepts of the aims and purposes of a youth work program, can apply them very unevenly and only in a limited way in its out-of-school projects. This is the main reason why the NYA has appeared to many persons alternately as a romantic work-relief agency and as a struggling agency of social welfare.

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE POLICY

In considering the lines along which a public youth work program may be developed in the near future, it is necessary to reconcile the short- and the long-run points of view, as well as conflicting interests.<sup>9</sup> It would be unrealistic to brush aside the emergency aspects of the problem and to ignore the obstacles to an expansion of youth programs which would mean a blitz-invasion of fenced-off fields, a larger administrative mechanism, and greatly increased public appropriations. On the other hand, a short-run, day-to-day emergency procedure prevents planned consideration of wider aims and hampers the use of even the means at hand.

The way out of this dilemma may be found in following the path already laid out and in widening it as we go along. The starting point is the work now carried on chiefly by the NYA. The stimulus for enlarged activities and the yardstick by which they may be judged must be supplied by some general concept of the place of this program in American social-economic life. The specific lines of development would then be planned in ac-

---

<sup>9</sup> This was written with a view to problems of policy under conditions of continued peace. The problem is assuming new aspects as a result of our rapid movement towards a condition of "national defense" and a "preparedness economy." Some of the effects of this shift in the situation are touched upon in Chapter 7.

cordance with the possibilities for extending existing programs in the direction of the larger goals.

It is suggested here that the three basic concepts of the aims and purposes of a youth work program may be reconciled, and that a unifying basis for a youth work program may be found in the idea that such a program is an integral element in a general national policy for securing real equality of opportunity and for raising standards of living for the mass of the people. By adopting this view, it is possible to close the gap between an emergency and a basic long-range program. Emergency measures are, in this view, a means to halt a disastrous fall in living standards due to temporary dislocations in the economic system, and to protect the personal qualities, social relations, and sense of security which are essential for an effective part in economic life after the emergency is over. Long-range policies are designed to improve and strengthen these qualities and relations so as to increase the individual and national capacity for social and economic advancement.

To the extent to which these policies are put into effect through the family as the unit of American society, they meet many of the needs and enlarge the opportunities of the youth. In this sense, those who regard the "youth problem" entirely as a phase of a general social problem are on solid ground. In so far as the condition of the youth depends in the first place upon the income, size, and cultural background of the families from which they come, raising the levels of living of the mass of the people means improving the status of youth. In other words, the "youth problem" neither begins nor ends with youth itself and can be properly considered only in relation to the problems which affect the family and the nation.

Nevertheless, there is logic and value in distinguishing a "youth problem" in a sense analogous to that in which we speak of a "child problem," or a "labor problem," or a "farm problem." It is helpful for purposes of study and action to relate a series of distinct and concrete problems of any group of the population to some basic fact or central issue. It implies that some problems are of peculiar importance to that group, and also, to some ex-

tent, that the meeting of the different specific problems depends upon an adequate answer to that basic issue. To speak of a "youth problem" implies that with reference to a group of a specified age, which is currently fixed at the ages of 16 through 24, there are a number of distinctive problems and that these problems are interrelated and inherent in a condition due to age. Certainly, problems of physical growth, nutrition, and health are related to age, and recreation has a distinct function to perform in regard to young persons. Problems of personality development, of forming a family, and of social adjustment assume special significance for youth. The needs for vocational guidance, occupational choice, and first adjustments on the job stand out as distinctive economic problems of youth. In a general way, these are the "youth problem" in so far as they involve steps in the process of transition to economic and social adulthood and call for the application of special policies in special ways.

Certain queries, however, are in order. The age limits of youth are affected not only by geographic but also by economic and social conditions and have shifted with changes in economic and social institutions. Maturity is a relative term and is not based on physiological grounds alone. There are considerable differences today in different countries in the age groups covered by the term "youth." In the same country, social-economic groups differ in their attitudes in this respect. There is a tendency on the part of the professional classes to try to universalize their own acceptance of the prolongation of the process of full entry into active economic and social life. It is a question whether the attitude of the industrial and laboring groups, who generally are eager for earlier economic and social independence, has not much in its favor.

Might not the "prolongation of youth" be carried too far? Such would seem to be the inclination on the part of those who claim that as the absolute numbers and relative proportion of the youth are on the decrease, owing to the changing age composition of the population, the tendency is for the productive population of the country to become concentrated in the age groups above that of the youth.

Youth, it is said, will benefit from this in so far as society will be able to give larger and richer educational and cultural opportunities to them. On the other hand, they will be denied entrance into gainful occupations because of the competition of older persons. Most young people will thus be thrown into a condition of preparation for a delayed adulthood, and the influence of youth generally in economic, political, and social life will be greatly reduced.

It is doubtful whether it is practicable to contemplate such a position for all or the majority in the age group from 16 through 24. Still more, it is questionable whether the population within this age group would acquiesce in being given such a position in our economic and social system. Undoubtedly, the age of maturity may be fixed differently for various economic and social purposes. It is so fixed today, resulting in different ages at which one may vote, or marry, or enter industry, or hold political office. But it is hardly possible to fix a late age for occupational maturity, since it conditions the capacity for leading an independent life generally.

To do so and to delay entrance into economic life, say until after 21, would necessitate not only changes in the educational system, as is generally recognized, but in our economy as well. For the near future, it would seem that the idea on which youth work programs can be based must be the same as that applied throughout the social system in general, namely, that of maximum self-realization and satisfaction, combined with such preparation for the future as is possible on the basis of available means and of foresight as to what the future may bring.

A parallel may, perhaps, be drawn in this respect between the "youth problem" and the "child problem." There are many historical and other analogies between the two. What aroused interest in the problems of the child were the abuses of child labor in industry. In the struggle for their elimination, the idea of child protection was steadily widened. Similarly, interest in the condition of youth goes back to the plight of young workers as a result of the depression of 1929-33, and the realization of

the implications gave rise to the wider concept of a "youth problem" and of programs for its solution.<sup>10</sup>

In the movement to better the conditions of child development, emphasis was at first on childhood as a preparatory stage of life. But this idea had serious limitations. Aside from the fact that large numbers of children do not reach maturity, the idea of preparation involves many difficulties. Could or should a large part of life be made entirely subordinate to aims and purposes which are indefinite and shifting in a changing world? Is it not sounder to assume that each age should live its life in relation to its inherent interests and values and also develop its capacity for meeting the problems and situations of growth as they come in due course of time?

This line of reasoning also helps to mark off the boundary between individual and social responsibility. In all societies, primitive and advanced, the process of initiation into the forms of social living has been regarded as a social responsibility. But in so far as a democratic system of life emphasizes freedom of choice and diversity of achievement, it limits social responsibility to the establishment of conditions under which equality of opportunity can prevail. In other words, it is the problem of society to provide youth with effective means of preparing themselves for successful adult living. It is the responsibility of the individual to make use of the opportunities given and to assume the obligations implied in these opportunities. Programs for youth must be so shaped as to stimulate the effort of the individual to do his best and to make a return for the social aid received.

There are other general aspects of the problem which call for examination. Some of them are considered in connection with the concrete issues discussed in the chapters which follow.

---

<sup>10</sup> See Senate Committee on Manufactures, 72d Cong., 2d sess., *Relief for Unemployed Transients, Hearings before a Sub-Committee on S. 5121, January 13-25, 1933* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1933).



---

# 3

## WHOM SHOULD THE PROGRAM SERVE?

---

ITS BASIC concepts and objectives determine the general character of a youth program. Its specific forms and its scope, however, must vary with the identity and needs of the youth concerned. The first question, then, in considering what a program should be, is: Who shall participate in the program—how many and what types of youth?

This general question has given rise to two specific issues which have assumed added importance as a result of the present national defense emergency. The first is the issue of a universal versus a partial program; and the second is that of a compulsory versus a voluntary program. These issues are influenced by differences of view on general objectives, as outlined in the preceding chapter, and involve not merely a question of scope but also of content and purpose.

It may be thought that the two issues are in reality one—that “universal” and “compulsory,” as well as “partial” and “voluntary,” are synonymous in their application to a youth work program; but in reality they are not, and the distinction is important. In recommending a program of employment for all youth in need of jobs, previously mentioned,<sup>1</sup> the American Youth Commission drew no inference that such employment should be compulsory, its point being that the *opportunity* for employment should be provided for every young person in the country. On the other hand, some proponents of compulsory military and other national service do not intend that such service shall be by

---

<sup>1</sup>See *A Program of Action for American Youth* (Washington: American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, 1939).

any means universal. Thus, either a universal or a partial program may be voluntary or compulsory.

### THE YOUTH IN NEED

In considering the possible scope of a program, let us examine briefly the conditions of youth today which determine their need for aid. The first discovery is that current programs are far from meeting what might be called the demand for them. Figures for May 1940 indicate that about 1,300,000 youth were employed on the various government work programs, distributed as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
YOUTH ON GOVERNMENT WORK PROGRAMS, MAY 1940 <sup>a</sup>

Program	Number employed	Male	Female
All programs.....	1,284,633	878,540	406,093
National Youth Administration			
School work program.....	349,248	163,793	185,455
College work program.....	126,306	75,018	51,288
Graduate work program.....	2,838	2,148	690
Out-of-school work program.....	289,945	161,075	128,870
Civilian Conservation Corps (junior enrollees).....	273,681	273,681	—
Work Projects Administration (youth under 25) <sup>b</sup> .....	242,615	202,825	39,790

<sup>a</sup> Data from NYA, CCC, and WPA statistical divisions.

<sup>b</sup> Estimated from total WPA rolls in May 1940 and percentages of youth group found in previous surveys.

It cannot be determined with accuracy what proportion of the youth of the country who would be eligible for and would welcome admittance to the several programs is not provided for. Only rough estimates can be made, which vary with the criteria of eligibility. Varying measures of the gap between the numbers cared for and those that might be cared for may be obtained by applying one of four criteria which underlie the objectives considered in the preceding chapter: (1) the number of applicants already certified as being unemployed and in need, (2) the num-



ber of needy unemployed youth not on the certified lists, (3) the number of youth in underprivileged and marginal families with incomes below or at the subsistence level, and (4) the number of youth in need of vocational training or employment.

### *Youth Already Certified*

According to information furnished by the NYA, there were on September 30, 1940, a total of 418,399 unemployed youth certified and awaiting assignment on NYA work projects. Of these, 226,536 were boys and 191,863 were girls. This means that the number of applicants was much larger than the number actually employed on such projects.<sup>2</sup>

### *Uncertified Needy Youth*

Youth certified for relief form but a relatively small proportion of all unemployed youth. Reliable data on the number of unemployed in general and of unemployed youth in particular in recent years are not available. As is well known, on the basis of the Enumerative Check Census of Unemployment of November-December 1937, the number of young persons, aged 15 to 24, inclusive, who were totally unemployed was estimated at 3,395,000 and those partly unemployed at 1,502,000. Among those totally unemployed, there were 940,000 boys between the ages of 15 and 19, inclusive, and 1,044,000 young men aged 20 through 24. The totally unemployed young women numbered 741,000 in the age group 15 through 19 and 670,000 in the age group 20 through 24.<sup>3</sup>

The figures of the Enumerative Check Census have been disputed. Besides, many changes in the industrial situation and in the composition of both the employed and unemployed have taken place since it was taken. A suggestive indication of the unemployed youth for a later date is supplied by the registrations in

---

<sup>2</sup> Information from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA, based on reports from state NYA administrators. For the distribution of applicants by states, see Appendix Table II, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix Table I, p. 157.

the United States Employment Service.<sup>4</sup> It may be assumed that young persons who make the effort to register are actively in the labor market and eager to find work.

According to the data of the Employment Service, in April 1940, about 1,265,000 young men and women under 25 years of age were on the active file inventory. This represented nearly 25 per cent of the total number of approximately 5,084,000 on the file.<sup>5</sup> These numbers do not represent the total number of unemployed, as not all those out of work register with the Employment Service. Assuming, however, the same proportion in the total unemployed population as in the active file inventory, the total number of unemployed youth would range between 2,500,000 and 3,000,000, depending upon the estimates of the total number of unemployed, which have ranged from 10 to 12 millions during 1938 and from 8 to 9 millions during 1939-40. And as the youth on emergency work are required to register with the Employment Service, it would mean that, *in addition to those now on various government projects*, there were in 1940 from 1,250,000 to 2,000,000 unemployed youth in the United States.

This estimate is confirmed by others made within recent months. According to the NYA the number of needy unemployed youth not certified on January 5, 1940 was 2,119,000. As those already certified numbered 340,000, it would mean that the total number of needy unemployed youth was then about 2,500,000.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Since July 1, 1939 the U. S. Employment Service has been the Employment Service Division of the Bureau of Employment Security, Social Security Board, Federal Security Agency. Since, however, it is still widely known under its original title, that title will be used in the present study.

<sup>5</sup> Bureau of Employment Security, *An Inventory of Job Seekers at Public Employment Offices, April 1940* (Washington: Social Security Board, 1940), Table 2. Mimeo. See Appendix Table III, p. 159.

<sup>6</sup> This figure is close to the estimate made by Stanley L. Payne, *Disadvantaged Youth on the Labor Market*, Division of Research, Series I, No. 25 (Washington: Work Projects Administration, 1940). Mimeo. Other reports of the division, as yet unpublished, also bear out these estimates. They also come very close to the preliminary figures on unemployed young persons published by the Bureau of the Census on February 8, 1941 ("Preliminary Figures on Employment Status of Persons 14 Years of Age and Over in the United States by Age, Color and Sex: March 24-30, 1940," Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Series P-4, No. 3. Mimeo.). According to this statement, there were in the United States during the

It may also be noted that the percentage of labor market youth is higher in the age group 20-24.

### *Youth in Underprivileged Families*

While the number of unemployed youth in need is large, the number of those who may be classified as "underprivileged" is larger. The term "underprivileged" has come into use to designate groups of the population who, for personal or economic reasons, are at or below the subsistence level. The term is a substitute for "poverty" which now sounds outmoded, though the conditions it describes are the same. The underprivileged include not only the destitute and the dependent but also those who suffer from economic insufficiency as determined by prevailing standards of what is required for subsistence or for health and decency.

It has been claimed in recent studies that such factors as the decrease in the average size of the family and the increase in the average number of persons contributing to family income have tended to improve levels of living.<sup>7</sup> This tendency has been offset in recent years by the effects of reduced business activity and unemployment and by structural changes in the American economy. At the same time, there has been a shift in consumption habits and in social ideas which have tended to raise the standards by which levels of living are to be judged. Without entering into a discussion of current classifications of the several recognized standards and levels of living and of their evaluations in money terms, it can hardly be disputed that most families with annual incomes of \$750 or less are certain to fall in the group characterized by economic insufficiency, and that the youth of such families are bound to be handicapped in their preparation for employment and for economic adulthood.

---

last week of March 1940 nearly 2,000,000 persons between 14 and 24 years of age "who were seeking work and who were without any form of employment." Of these, 963,028 were between 14 and 19 years of age and 1,035,474 were between the ages of 20 and 24. These figures do *not* include persons employed on public emergency work (WPA, NYA, CCC, and so on).

<sup>7</sup> See Harry A. Millis and Royal E. Montgomery, *Labor's Progress and Some Basic Labor Problems* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1938), Vol. I, p. 128.

How widespread the condition of economic insufficiency is in the United States, as determined by an income of \$750 a year or less, is indicated by recent studies on income distribution. According to the report published by the National Resources Committee, during the year 1935-36 almost one-third of all families and single individuals in the country had incomes of less than \$750. Almost 4,000,000 families and single individuals in this "lower third" of the nation had been dependent on relief for at least part of the year, but fully 70 per cent of the total number, that is a little over 9,000,000, had received no assistance of any kind from a relief agency. About 1,700,000 of this non-relief group were independent single men living alone or as lodgers; almost the same number (1,600,000) were single women; and 5,900,000 were families of two or more persons.<sup>8</sup>

TABLE 2

PER CAPITA INCOME OF NONRELIEF AND RELIEF FAMILIES, BY SIZE OF FAMILY, 1935-36<sup>a</sup>

Relief status and size of family	Families		Per capita income (mean)
	Number	Per cent	
All families.....	29,400,300	100.0	\$411
Families not receiving relief.....	24,913,200	84.7	463
2 persons.....	6,668,800	22.7	774
3-4 persons.....	11,170,400	38.0	542
5-6 persons.....	4,804,400	16.3	355
7 or more persons.....	2,269,600	7.7	221
Families receiving some relief.....	4,487,100	15.3	165

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (Washington: National Resources Committee, 1938), Table 4, p. 21.

Of the 29,400,000 families in the United States 4,487,000, or 15 per cent, were receiving some relief during 1935-36. These families on relief were not all in the "lower third," for many families with annual incomes above \$750 were forced to apply for relief. But considering the 24,913,200 nonrelief families

<sup>a</sup> *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (Washington: National Resources Committee, 1938), Table 2 and discussion, pp. 6, 9.

only, it is found that while *total* family earnings are apt to increase with the size of the family, the *per capita* annual income decreased in direct ratio to the size of the family. (See Table 2.)

From the data given in the report of the National Resources Committee, it appears that about 5,469,000 nonrelief families, of which about 3,560,000 consisted of three or more persons, had an income of less than \$750 a year. (See Table 3.)

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF NONRELIEF FAMILIES, BY SIZE AND INCOME LEVEL, 1935-36<sup>a</sup>

Income level	Number of families				
	2 persons	3-4 persons	5-6 persons	7 or more persons	Total number
Totals.....	1,907,275	2,155,886	884,008	522,007	5,469,176
Under \$250.....	340,108	234,578	81,674	43,122	699,482
\$250-\$500.....	713,561	759,587	302,677	179,298	1,955,123
\$500-\$750.....	853,606	1,161,721	499,657	299,587	2,814,571

<sup>a</sup>Based on data given in *Consumer Incomes in the United States*, Tables 4 and 5, pp. 21-22.

The significance of the figures presented, in terms of levels of living and of opportunities for the younger generations, may be indicated by the following quotation from another report of the National Resources Committee:

In the picture of American standards of living, presented in the above pages, no attempt has been made to appraise the money expenditures made by different income groups in terms of the adequacy of the food, housing, and other goods and services consumed. Yet even from these dollars-and-cents figures it becomes unmistakably clear that the level of living maintained by the entire lower third of the nation falls below the minimum requirements for healthful and decent living, and that few even of the middle third are able to enjoy what is customarily called an "American" standard of living.<sup>9</sup>

It is not possible, on the basis of available data, to say how many individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 are in families

<sup>9</sup> *Consumer Expenditures in the United States* (Washington: National Resources Committee, 1939), p. 42.



of lowest income status, as defined above. However, an indication of the large numbers involved is supplied by a study made recently under the auspices of the Social Security Board. This study,<sup>10</sup> using the data obtained by the National Health Survey<sup>11</sup> for some 700,000 urban households, computes the number of children and youth in families of different economic levels.

TABLE 4

NUMBER<sup>a</sup> AND PERCENTAGE<sup>a</sup> OF PERSONS UNDER 16 AND BETWEEN 16 AND 24 YEARS OF AGE IN URBAN FAMILIES OF GIVEN ECONOMIC STATUS, 1935-36<sup>b</sup>

Age group (years)	Persons in all family income groups		Persons in non-relief families with incomes over \$1000		Persons in families with incomes under \$1000					
					Total		Relief		Nonrelief	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
All ages. . . .	2,504,104	100.0	1,372,939	57.1	1,031,740	42.9	453,217	18.9	578,523	24.0
Under 16. . . .	647,639	100.0	324,095	51.3	307,239	48.7	167,350	26.5	139,889	22.2
16-24. . . . .	401,916	100.0	215,797	56.6	165,176	43.4	72,236	19.0	92,940	24.4

<sup>a</sup> Excludes persons of unknown age and persons in families of unknown economic status.

<sup>b</sup> I. S. Falk and Barkev S. Sanders, "The Economic Status of Urban Families and Children," *Social Security Bulletin*, II (May 1939), 30 (Table 5).

Briefly, the study finds that of the 2,504,000 individuals in the families covered by the National Health Survey, there were about 648,000 children under 16 and about 402,000 persons between 16 and 24 years of age. Of the 648,000 children, 49 per cent, or nearly half, were in families reported as being on relief or having annual incomes of less than \$1,000. Of the 402,000 persons aged 16 to 24, over 165,000, or more than 43 per cent, were in families on relief or having incomes of less than \$1,000 a year.

<sup>10</sup> I. S. Falk and Barkev S. Sanders, "The Economic Status of Urban Families and Children," *Social Security Bulletin*, II (May 1939), 25-34.

<sup>11</sup> *The Relief and Income Status of the Urban Population of the United States: The National Health Survey, 1935-1936* (Washington: U. S. Public Health Service, 1938).



The methods used in the study of the Social Security Board, according to the authors, tend to make the results "an overstatement rather than an under-statement of the income of the urban population of the United States." If the composition of the families is also representative, and it appears to be, then the numbers of underprivileged children and youth in the United States are truly overwhelming.

### *Youth Needing Vocational Training*

The fourth criterion, that of educational and vocational opportunities, also reveals a considerable gap between need and fulfillment. The extent of the gap may be suggested in several ways. It is estimated by the United States Office of Education, for instance, that over 7,000,000 pupils are now enrolled in secondary schools and that about 1,200,000 will graduate in 1941. Of these graduates, about 400,000 go to college and about 100,000 enter trade and other postsecondary training schools. About half a million are likely to enter the labor market with no more vocational or technical preparation than that which the secondary school may have given them.<sup>12</sup>

The graduates from secondary schools form about one-third of all new entrants into industry in the course of the year. The total gross annual entrance into the labor market of persons between the ages of 10 and 25, inclusive, was estimated in 1930 at 1,670,000. Of these, about 1,134,000 were 18 years of age or under; about 350,000 were in the age group 19 and 20; and about 173,000 were between 21 and 25 years of age.<sup>13</sup> The half million or more new entrants into industry, aged 18 or less, who were not high school graduates, are in the vast majority young boys and girls who have had meager, if any, opportunities for vocational guidance and training.

---

<sup>12</sup> Based on proportions given in a statement by J. C. Wright, Assistant Commissioner for Vocational Education, in *Vocational Education and the Future of Workers, Old and Young*, prepared as testimony before the Temporary National Economic Committee, April 25, 1940 (Washington: U. S. Office of Education, 1940), p. 10. Mimeo.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix Table IV, p. 160.

Furthermore, among the young persons who have found employment and are at work, there are large numbers who are ill-prepared for their tasks and in need of assistance for the purpose of occupational adjustment and advancement. The number of persons between 18 and 24 years of age "gainfully occupied" in 1930 was nearly 9,700,000. About 8,500,000 young men and women, aged 18 to 24, inclusive of emergency workers, were either fully employed or working part time in 1937.<sup>14</sup> What proportion of these young workers were actively interested in further educational and vocational assistance cannot be ascertained, but it certainly was large.

TABLE 5

NUMBER OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN SPECIFIED KINDS OF FEDERALLY AIDED VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS, BY TYPE OF CLASS, SCHOOL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1939<sup>a</sup>

Type of class	Number enrolled				
	All schools	Agricultural schools	Trade and industrial schools	Home economics schools	Distributive schools
All classes.....	2,085,427	538,586	715,239	741,503	90,099
Evening.....	657,603	181,962	156,464	236,034	83,143
Part-time.....	486,551	51,593	362,410	65,592	6,956
All-day.....	941,273	305,031	196,365	439,877	—

<sup>a</sup> Data from J. C. Wright, *Vocational Education and the Future of Workers, Old and Young*, testimony before the Temporary National Economic Committee, April 25, 1940 (Washington: U. S. Office of Education, 1940), Exhibit 2. Mimeo.

It is generally agreed that existing facilities for vocational guidance and training are inadequate. Three-fourths of the high schools of the country are said to "have little possibility for vocational training other than in agricultural or home economics."<sup>15</sup> While the larger cities have the means to provide "highly diversified vocational programs," the smaller communities, in which about half of our population is found, are not in a position to do so. Private industry provides technical training,

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix Tables V and VI, pp. 161-62.

<sup>15</sup> *Vocational Education and the Future of Workers, Old and Young*, p. 11.

through vestibule schools, apprenticeship courses, and otherwise, to between 75,000 and 100,000 at most in a number of industries.<sup>16</sup> There are about 1,000,000 persons enrolled in all-day vocational schools and about as many in part-time and evening courses, as shown by Table 5. What proportion of these enrollees are between the ages of 18 and 24 is not known.

As is well known, the disparity between needs and opportunities varies regionally, by occupations and otherwise. The studies quoted above contain some data on how families of different income status are distributed by regions, occupations, types of community, and so forth. The report of the National Resources Committee on consumer incomes in the United States shows that 23 per cent of all nonrelief families in the wage-earning group and 36 per cent of all nonrelief families in the farming group had an income of less than \$750 a year.<sup>17</sup> These data confirm what is common knowledge, that the majority of underprivileged youth come from families of workers in low-wage groups and from rural areas. Several studies have been made of the special problems and of the inequalities of educational opportunities of some sections of the country and of particular groups of the population, which it is impossible to examine here.<sup>18</sup>

### Summary

To sum up, whatever criterion is used, the case for an expanded youth work program, if not for a universal one, appears

<sup>16</sup> Based on estimates by the U. S. Department of Labor.

<sup>17</sup> *Consumer Incomes in the United States*, Table 10, p. 26. For variations in per capita income payments by states see John L. Martin, "Income Payments to Individuals, by States, 1929-1938," *Survey of Current Business*, XX (April 1940), 8-15.

<sup>18</sup> See Newton Edwards, *Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth* (Washington: American Council on Education, 1939); Bruce L. Melvin and Elna V. Smith, *Youth in Agricultural Villages* (Washington: Works Progress Administration, 1940); Division of Social Research, *Urban Youth: Their Characteristics and Economic Problems*, preliminary report (Washington: Works Progress Administration, 1939); Bruce L. Melvin and Elna N. Smith, *Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects* (Washington: Works Progress Administration, 1938); *Report of the Committee* (Washington: Advisory Committee on Education, 1938) and various staff studies of the Advisory Committee on Education.

clearly established. Obviously the criteria examined above are interdependent. A lower-income status of a family usually implies a lack of occupational opportunities for the youth belonging to it. Fewer educational and vocational chances are associated with regional differences in economic resources, financial strength, and the provision of community services. But disregarding regional and other differences and looking at the national situation as a whole, one faces the fact that millions of young persons live under conditions which are a denial of the ideal of equality of opportunity and a challenge to make this ideal a reality.

### A UNIVERSAL VERSUS A PARTIAL PROGRAM

It is in the light of the conditions sketched above that a general youth work program has been advocated for some time by those who look at the youth problem from a broad educational and vocational point of view. As indicated in the preceding chapter, a youth work program, in this view, is an essential element in a comprehensive educational-vocational-employment system in which work and work experience would become integral parts of secondary and postsecondary education.

In broad outline, what is thought of as a universal youth work program, which would carry the youth from the secondary school to self-supporting employment, is expressed in the following words in a newly published report:

. . . there should be a new social attitude toward work as a highly desirable factor in the experience of young people. Several very vigorous efforts have been made by social reformers to convince the American people that a system of publicly useful work corresponding to army service in Europe, but of a distinctly nonmilitary type, would be advantageous in this country. *If all young persons were mobilized to do service for the country for a reasonable period during adolescence, a long step would be taken in the direction of solving some of the most urgent youth problems of the present time.* There is no factor of general education which is more important to consider than work. This statement should not be thought of as applying merely to a few marginal cases but should be accepted as a principle of the widest possible application. Those who are to enter the professions need to labor at some period in their lives in order to gain an understanding and appreciation of what labor is. Those who are going to earn their living by labor

have a right to be trained under competent supervision so that they may enter on their careers under the most favorable conditions possible.<sup>19</sup>

The proposed program, according to its proponents, could seemingly be organized in three ways. For some the work experience could be provided by the secondary schools themselves. Another group, while continuing in school, would work in private or public employment outside the school. This would make necessary a readjustment of instructional courses and of the methods of the secondary school. A third group, including those graduated from schools and those uninterested in further schooling or unable for economic reasons to continue in school and unable to find private employment, would be given paid work and work experience in public employment. It is assumed that the tendency is for adolescents between the ages of 17 and 20, inclusive, to remain more and more outside of private industry and thus to be in need of public employment.

The magnitude of the task implied in this bold proposal may be indicated by a few figures. In 1937 the total population 15 to 19 years of age was estimated at 12,109,000. The population of high school age (15 to 18 years) was about 9,675,000 (4,886,000 boys and 4,789,000 girls). The number of high school students in 1936 was 6,425,000, or about two-thirds of the population of high school age.<sup>20</sup> About 1,266,000 boys and 875,000 girls between 15 and 19 years of age had either full- or part-time employment. About 1,703,000 boys and girls 15 to 19 years of age were totally unemployed. In other words, on the basis of these figures, a universal labor service such as that outlined above would necessitate: (1) placing over 3,000,000 more young persons in schools which would provide them with schooling and work experience or giving a large proportion of them outside work; and (2) it would also mean the provision of public

---

<sup>19</sup> *What the High Schools Ought to Teach* (Washington: American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, 1940), pp. 19-20. Italics are the present author's.

<sup>20</sup> *Biennial Survey of Education in the United States: 1934-36*, Bulletin, 1937, No. 2 (Washington: U. S. Office of Education, 1939), Vol. II, Chap. I, "Statistical Summary of Education: 1935-36," Table 9, p. 12. Secondary school enrollment for 1940-41 is estimated at 7,160,000 by the U. S. Office of Education.



work to about 2,000,000 persons, wholly or partly unemployed or in emergency work. If provision were made only for the age groups 18 to 21 the total number to be provided for would still be in the millions, and the task appears no smaller for the near future according to estimates of the youth population in the next two decades.<sup>21</sup>

Owing in part to its magnitude and in part to its nature, the difficulties in the way of a general work program would be considerable. The costs involved are high. The reorganizations in the educational system which would be necessary are so large and so complex as to require considerable time. Public attitudes toward work and wages are not favorable to such a large scheme, and much effort will be required to change these attitudes. Wide experimenting will be called for in order to develop a work program which can meet the varied needs of a large and heterogeneous youth population such as ours. But these and other difficulties, it is claimed, can be overcome given the need and the national will.

The concepts of a youth work program, other than the educational, clearly point toward a selective basis of participation in it. Whether the main objective of such a program be that of providing work relief in an emergency, or of giving training to those seeking work, or of reinforcing provisions for social welfare, the scope of the program is limited to groups selected with reference to the objective sought. The differences in the scope of the program may not be very great in view of the fact that the several criteria applied are likely to overlap with regard to certain strata of the population and to some sections of the country.

Those who advocate a limited and selective program proceed on the premise that public funds should supplement private effort only where most needed. From the several viewpoints presented, there are only limited groups in the population which are in need of aid, whether in times of economic emergency or as a result of special disabilities at any time. The number of

---

<sup>21</sup> For 1937 youth population figures see Appendix Table VI, p. 162; for estimates of the youth population 1940-60 see Appendix Table VII, p. 163.



youth who are so seriously handicapped in their development toward economic and social adulthood as to need public aid is large, but not all-inclusive. The first duty, therefore, is to help those who have first call on public aid and to grade programs in accordance with need.

### A COMPULSORY VERSUS A VOLUNTARY PROGRAM

In recent months, the idea of a universal program that would also be compulsory has arisen, being linked to the need for national defense and for the strengthening of democratic ideals. A proposal which received considerable attention was made during the summer of 1940, that Congress adopt a comprehensive program calling for some form of universal, compulsory government service for the country's youth from all walks of life for the period of one year. The plan contemplated four categories of service: (1) actual service with the Army and Navy; (2) a behind-the-lines army of uniformed communication and aviation technicians; (3) a noncombatant and nonuniformed supply of industrial technicians engaged in production of essential military and naval items, including clothing; and (4) an agricultural group to be schooled in the conservation of natural resources.

In presenting this proposal, its advocates stated that they did not believe in compulsory military training as a general policy but that they regarded compulsory "government service" as a "training for democracy." They pointed to the CCC as an example of the type of healthy and nonmilitary discipline used to develop a feeling of social responsibility in the youth of the country.

The discussion which followed this proposal has helped to crystallize the arguments for and against a compulsory national labor service. The arguments in favor of the proposal may be summarized as follows.

1. It would be a means to strengthen democracy. By bringing together youth of all classes and sections of the country in the performance of common tasks, a new basis would be created for democratic thinking, and a new realization of the common Amer-

ican heritage would be stimulated. Habits of cooperation and feelings of comradeship would be formed that would not be forgotten when the young people took up their places again in their communities. The youth would regard themselves as workers in constructive work for the common good, just as the army is mobilized for common defense.

2. It would insure a minimum subsistence and decent work to all unemployed youth for a stated period during the transition from school to a job. The large waiting lists of the NYA and the CCC as they now function are evidence that the government programs now in operation to aid unemployed youth are far from covering the need. If a universal compulsory labor service were adopted, these youth would at least have a chance to get some work experience and receive some income. For youth who do not need the work for subsistence, the service would mean a chance to get the "feel" of working and of being useful.

3. Such a compulsory labor service would dignify labor for all classes of youth. It is a deplorable fact that many young people today scoff at the idea of doing industrial or agricultural work. There has been a tendency to prefer white-collar positions even though the white-collar lines of work have been overcrowded. Since the labor service would be universal and compulsory, all youth would have a chance to do some work with their hands and discover the satisfactions that result. Gradually, the youth would become interested in work in industrial concerns and on the farm.

4. A universal labor service would provide training in many fields which the present educational system fails to supply. Just as the NYA and the CCC have opened up new fields of work for unemployed youth, so the universal labor service would establish vocational training and counseling on a much larger scale. As a result, occupational "misfits" would be less numerous. Instead of the conflict that now prevails among various government agencies that offer training to youth, there would be one co-ordinated program. It would also provide better training because the youth would be under constant supervision for a given period of time instead of working part time and then being away

from work for a period, as is the case now on NYA work projects.

5. As a supplementary part of the program, "related training" and general educational courses could be given. Here again the fixed period of service and the constant supervision would be an advantage. It would be possible to achieve a synthesis of work, education, and leisure-time guidance, the value of which educators have been emphasizing.

6. It would help a great deal to conserve the natural resources of the United States. The CCC has already made valuable contributions to conservation in the country. A national and universal program would go much further.

7. In doing constructive work the young people would have an opportunity to study at first hand and in a concrete and practical way the economic and social conditions of America. This would make them better citizens and more alert to the problems of their own section of the country.

8. If and as the need for national defense becomes more acute, an organized labor corps of youth would be of great value. Then, too, some military training could easily be included in the program.

9. An adequate health program could be developed in connection with a compulsory labor service program that would be far more effective than any other form of health protection now offered. Health authorities are agreed that there is need for a system of health examination and care for the young people of the nation.

10. While the idea of a universal labor service has totalitarian associations, it need not be totalitarian in spirit or method. Its compulsory nature may be just as readily accepted in time as compulsory schooling is now. Also, the nonmilitary character of the work and its connection with the schools, on one hand, and with industry, on the other, would prevent it from being used for purposes inimical to the spirit of a free economic system and of democratic institutions.

The forms which might be given to such a program are still vague. In general, it is apparently the plan that all youth of the United States, regardless of their need, would be required to

serve a limited number of months, or perhaps a year, in some work of national importance. The age at which the service should begin is between 18 and 24. The nature of the work to be done has not as yet been fully described. It would, presumably, be largely subservient to the needs of conservation and of national defense. The youth of all races, classes, and religions would be organized into a working and democratic body.<sup>22</sup>

The arguments against the proposed universal and compulsory programs and in defense of the voluntary and selective principles, may be summarized as follows.

1. A compulsory labor service for all youth would result in many of the evils that have been connected with such schemes in totalitarian countries. It would be possible for demagogues and special interests to obtain power over such highly organized youth groups for selfish purposes, perverting the training of youth until it became an instrument for regimentation or political demagoguery, rather than for the development of the individual.

2. There would be a struggle among different groups to control the youth in the labor service. This might result in great confusion in the program which would nullify its potential benefits to the youth and to the country. But, more likely than not, the compulsory labor service would soon fall under the control of the Army, especially at this juncture in our history, so that it would become militaristic and lose all the other values that the program was intended to produce.

3. If organized for a year or so, the program would interrupt the educational plans and progress of many youth. In fact it would require a complete reorganization of the educational system, as pointed out above. On the other hand, large numbers of the youth outside the schools would be drawn off the labor market also in times of active business and thus create dislocations in the supply of labor.

---

<sup>22</sup> These provisions were embodied in a bill introduced into the Congress by Congressman Voorhis of California on August 29, 1940. See H. R. 10430, 76th Cong., 3d sess., "A bill to provide a balanced program of national defense, to offer opportunity for constructive service to the nation by its citizens, and to create a national service and training program in the United States." The bill was reintroduced by Mr. Voorhis on January 3, 1941, as H. R. 162, 77th Cong., 1st sess.

4. A compulsory labor service might endanger the standards of training which have already been set up in many industries and in current work programs. This would be especially true if the youth were to be trained in skills rapidly, in order that production for national defense might be stepped up. Operations and processes would have to be subdivided in such a way that few workers would receive much worth-while training. Existing regulations for apprenticeship training are also likely to be infringed upon. This will result in the loss of work standards which have been developed after much effort. The situation would be complicated by the difficulty of finding good supervisors and administrators for such large numbers of workers within a reasonable period of time.

5. The training given in labor service might not be in the skills that youth could use in getting jobs in private industry when their time of service was completed. This would be especially true if the compulsory labor service were linked with national defense. Youth employed in munitions factories, for instance, might find it hard to find jobs with the skills acquired. After the compulsory service period youthful workers would have to be retrained to fit into peacetime industries. Even if conservation work were done, there is a question whether this type of work prepares youth to earn their living in private industry. It is also difficult to see what work could be devised on such a large scale for girls and young women.

6. It is more than likely that large numbers of young persons would leave the service without much benefit to themselves and without added chances for finding jobs. These young people would become a serious problem in so far as they are likely to regard themselves as wards of the government or as "labor service veterans" with claims on the government and on the public purse.

7. The setting up of the service at once would create many complicated questions of administration, sanitation, public health, industrial transfers, and the like which would be harmful industrially and socially.

8. In brief, the scheme for a compulsory universal service is



too complex and fraught with danger to our economic and social order. It is, besides, entirely unnecessary. The number of unemployed and needy youth is large enough to engage fully the energies of the government in developing a training program, if that is desired.

### THE SELECTIVE PROGRAM OF THE NYA

Though a limited and selective program may be less complex than a general program would be, it raises many problems. No matter what the base of selection is, questions of priority and of the best way in which to secure proper selection are bound to arise; unless these questions are answered, the program may fail in its purpose. This is illustrated by the experience of the NYA, and the analysis which follows is intended to clarify some of the problems in the application of the selective principle in practice.

The chief basis of selecting youth for work on NYA projects is that of need. Young persons between the ages of 18 and 24, inclusive, citizens of the United States, are eligible if unemployed and needy (that is, if they are members of families whose income is insufficient to meet basic needs). Until recently, evidence of need consisted in the certification of the families by local relief agencies, the WPA, or other public and private agencies.<sup>23</sup> The tendency has been to dissociate the selection of youth from certification by relief agencies. This is justified on the ground that many families are at or below the margin of subsistence without either applying or being eligible for relief.

It is thus left to the state administrators and local supervisors of the NYA to determine what youth are in need of assistance. In general, the great majority of the youth come from families on relief or in the lowest income groups. Complete data on the

---

<sup>23</sup> Local relief agencies are requested to certify to the NYA all unemployed and needy youth known to such agencies. In the case of youth from families which have already been subject to an investigation of need, certification by state and local public relief agencies, the WPA, or the Farm Security Administration is accepted as *prima facie* evidence of need on the part of youth members. For youth whose families have not been subject to an investigation of need by a public relief agency, the state youth administration accepts referrals from public and private agencies or direct applications from youth. The family incomes and other factors of need affecting the eligibility of these youth are investigated before their applications are accepted.



family incomes of the out-of-school youth on NYA projects are not available, but some light is thrown on the situation by the partial studies made. These studies indicate that the condition of need and of low income of the families is associated with unemployment, large numbers of children, low educational levels, employment in low-wage occupations of the father, and so forth. A study of 10,400 young persons on NYA projects in New York state in 1936 showed a mean of 6.2 persons in each family and wide unemployment.<sup>24</sup>

In view of the wide variations in size of family and in income levels of the population of the United States by states, regions, and urban and rural areas, it is inevitable that the number and proportions of youth aided to the total population, or to the youth population, should vary. The data of the NYA show this to be the case. The ratio of youth employed on NYA projects in March 1940 to the total youth population as reported in the 1930 census ranged from 1.2 per cent in New York City and 1.3 per cent in Louisiana to 4.8 per cent in South Dakota.<sup>25</sup> The NYA reports that, except for rural counties in which the population of the largest municipality was less than 2,500 in 1930 and in urban communities with municipalities over 100,000 in size, the urban-rural distribution of youth employed on NYA out-of-school work programs is approximately the same as that in the general population.<sup>26</sup> This means that the NYA work projects provide relatively more work to rural than to urban youth. A survey made by the national office of the NYA during the week ending February 25, 1939, covering 22,230 youth on NYA projects in six states and the District of Columbia,<sup>27</sup> showed

---

<sup>24</sup> See Appendix Tables VIII, IX, X, pp. 163-64.

<sup>25</sup> See Appendix Table XI, p. 165.

<sup>26</sup> See House Committee on Appropriations, 76th Cong., 3d sess., *Department of Labor—Federal Security Agency Appropriations Bill for 1941, Hearings . . . February and March 1940* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), Pt. 2, p. 576.

<sup>27</sup> The survey covered Colorado, District of Columbia, Georgia, Kentucky, Nebraska, Oregon, and Rhode Island and included about 10 per cent of all youth employed on NYA projects during the week ending February 25, 1939. Findings stated above are reported in *Characteristics of Youth Employed on NYA Work Projects* (Washington: National Youth Administration, September 1, 1939), p. 10. Mimeo.

that 34 per cent of the youth came from counties in which there was a city with a population of 100,000 and over; 38 per cent from counties which had cities with a population of from 5,000 to 100,000; while 28 per cent came from counties where there were no cities or towns with a population of more than 5,000. A more complete statement of youth employment on NYA projects for January 1940 is that in Table 6, together with the distribution of the youth population in 1930 according to size of community.

TABLE 6

DISTRIBUTION OF YOUTH EMPLOYED ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROJECTS, JANUARY 1940,  
ACCORDING TO SIZE OF LARGEST COMMUNITY IN COUNTY<sup>a</sup>

Urbanization group	Population aged 15-24, 1930 (per cent)	Youth employed on NYA projects, January 1940	
		Number	Per cent
All groups.....	100.0	311,918	100.0
100,000 and over.....	38.1	99,821	32.0
50,000-100,000.....	6.7	23,060	7.4
25,000- 50,000.....	7.6	26,871	8.6
10,000- 25,000.....	12.9	38,681	12.4
5,000- 10,000.....	10.3	33,717	10.8
2,500- 5,000.....	10.5	31,922	10.2
Under 2,500.....	13.9	57,846	18.6

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Summarized Statement of Operations through January 1940* (Washington: National Youth Administration, 1940), p. 5. Mimeo.

The bias in favor of rural youth is presumably justified by their greater need, by a general desire to reduce the inequalities in advantages between urban and rural youth, or by considerations of a political character.

How the selective principle operates in the NYA with regard to other characteristics is shown by the 1939 survey already referred to. With regard to age, the tendency is to select the younger group within the 18-24 limits. Nearly two-thirds of the youth surveyed were under 21 years of age, and the variations in age between the sex and race groups were slight. Boys in general were somewhat older than girls; white boys were older than

Negro boys, while white girls were younger than Negro girls.<sup>28</sup>

The ratio of boys and girls on NYA projects fluctuated considerably; except for periods of brief recovery, the boys formed the larger group, varying between 57 and 60 per cent of the total. There was a tendency for a somewhat larger representation of Negro youth on NYA projects as compared with the race composition of the general population; 12 per cent of NYA youth in the 1939 survey were Negro as compared with 11 per cent Negro in the population of 1930, aged 15-24. But, if the white and Negro population in the same income groups are compared, the participation of Negroes in the NYA programs would probably be less than proportionate to numbers.

Of particular interest are the characteristics of NYA youth with regard to education and previous work experience. Some 23 per cent of the 22,230 youth covered in the 1939 survey completed less than eight grades in grammar school; another 17 per cent did not go beyond the eighth grade; about 30 per cent attended high school for from one to three years; and another 26 per cent were graduated from high school. An additional 3 per cent were able to go to college for three years or less. A fraction of one per cent were college graduates, and another fraction had no education whatever.<sup>29</sup>

The records of work experience show that over half of the NYA youth project employees covered by the survey had never held any kind of job before working on NYA projects. Sixty-five per cent of the white girls and 47 per cent of the white boys had no previous work experience. More Negro youth had worked as compared with white youth.<sup>30</sup>

Of those who had had previous work experience, about 42 per cent had been in private employment and about 7 per cent had been in public employment, chiefly in CCC camps. The bulk of the work experience that NYA project youth had obtained in private employment was of an unskilled nature, one-fifth of the youth having been farm laborers and another fifth having

---

<sup>28</sup> See Appendix Table XII, p. 167.

<sup>29</sup> See Appendix Table XIII, p. 167.

<sup>30</sup> See Appendix Table XIV, p. 168.

been employed as messengers, delivery boys, gasoline station attendants, porters, and janitors. All told, 90 per cent of the youth either had had no work experience or the slight experience offered by occupations requiring little or no skill. There are wide variations in the previous work experience among the race and sex groups. Over a third of the white boys and nearly a fourth of the Negro boys with work experience had been farm laborers; 40 per cent of the white girls had held private jobs as domestic servants in private families as compared with 73 per cent of the Negro girls.<sup>31</sup>

Though these data are fragmentary, they seem to justify the conclusion that the NYA is providing aid for underprivileged youth in great need. To that extent, it is applying effectively the selective principle on which it is operating. But in so far as the NYA is aiming at the same time to improve the employability of young persons, to provide more private jobs to unemployed youth, and to do work which is of value to local communities, its selection of youth may not be entirely satisfactory. The youth in greatest need of work experience is not always likely to be the best equipped for socially useful work. The least schooled and trained youth may not have the same chances of early private employment as the youth who have had greater opportunities.

In other words, in applying the selective principle of need, the NYA may run counter to some of its other objectives. Such conflict cannot be entirely avoided. All that can be attempted is to reconcile the different aims as much as possible by keeping the main priorities in view and by making the administrative procedures as flexible as possible.

---

<sup>31</sup> See Appendix Table XV, p. 168.

---

## 4

# WHAT WORK SHOULD YOUTH DO?

---

NEXT IN importance to the youth selected is the work done through youth work programs. To justify the greater expense of work projects, as compared with ordinary relief measures, these projects should produce concrete outcomes of one or more of the following types: (1) they should give worth-while training to the participants and effective aid in entering private industry; (2) they should provide the community or the nation with useful public works in the fields of conservation, construction, repair, and the like; (3) they should be so integrated with the economic life of the nation that they raise living standards, add to effective consumer demand, remove an excess load from the labor market, and provide industry with more efficient and experienced workers when they are needed.

It is assumed here that youth work programs in the near future will tend to become generalized, though probably continuing to be based on selective principles, and that the programs will stress more and more the provision of work experience, training, and employment, as well as providing relief. In addition, it is assumed that the work projects planned will continue to be related to socially useful purposes.

In considering the nature and scope of work programs on these assumptions, it is necessary to deal with at least three large problems which in turn give rise to many interrelated questions. One of these problems centers about standards of selection. What criteria may be used to determine whether projects are socially useful? What is the basis for judging their value as a means of training? How well are they adjusted to the aptitudes, interests, and occupational chances of different youth groups?



A second problem is that of the internal organization of the work projects. The questions involved are related to the processes of work itself and of training for it. What is the most effective way of assigning youth to different work projects? How can the projects be organized so as to give the best results at the least cost? How can efficiency be combined with the needs for training? How much and what kind of supervision are needed to develop proper work habits and skills?

Another problem bears on the lines along which a work program may be further expanded and developed. Which of the projects already tried have promise in relation to the trends of industry, the changing demand for labor, the relations of different age groups in industry? Can a work program be devised to fit in at one and the same time with private industrial expansion and with plans for the development of public enterprise? What measures would be necessary to link such a program with the school system on the one hand and with the vocational and training facilities of private industry on the other? Are the types of projects now sponsored broad enough to allow for further growth?

In view of the scope of this study it is possible to consider only those questions which bear on the larger issues of the development of a program for the future.

### THE SELECTION OF WORK PROJECTS

The selection of work projects gives rise to several problems which are inherent in the necessity of reconciling somewhat conflicting interests. On the one hand, projects must be related to the needs of local communities and must be of use to these communities. On the other hand, these projects must also have training value for the youth aided and must be varied enough to meet the interests, aptitudes, and occupational needs of young men and women in the local community, whatever its character or industrial structure.

In examining the ways in which these standards conflict and how they may be reconciled, the experience of the NYA is of basic importance. What the NYA has done and is doing today throws light both on general principles and on their practical



application. It is thus necessary to refer here to this experience, though it must be emphasized again that references to the NYA are made here merely by way of illustrating the principles and problems which must be dealt with in any youth work program.

In the official statements of the NYA, the problem of selecting work projects is usually presented as rather simple. To quote one official statement:

Plans for work projects originate in the local communities and are based on a consideration of community needs and the type of unemployed youth requesting work. Local public authorities, such as school boards, city councils, welfare departments, county agricultural agencies, park boards, etc., consult with local NYA officials concerning the work they wish to have done by the unemployed youth in their communities. If a proposed project is socially useful and will provide proper training and experience to young workers, it is submitted to the state youth administrator for approval and allocation of funds. Construction projects with material costs of more than \$1,000 and projects of a technical nature must be approved by the central [national] office before they can be placed in operation, but all other projects require only local and state approval. The fact that work projects are developed and cosponsored by local public agencies insures the proper integration of projects into a community structure and a high standard of local supervision.<sup>1</sup>

### *Social Utility and Training Value*

As a matter of fact, the interrelation of social usefulness and training value in projects is a difficult problem which has been far from solved by the NYA. It is common experience that one or another group in a community or the majority of the townspeople often want projects which are not necessarily the best for the training of youth. Local government agencies, for instance, are often in need of clerical workers. They request NYA projects of this type. Local NYA officials are inclined to accept such proposals because they are easy and inexpensive (requiring little or no equipment) and because they meet the desire

---

<sup>1</sup> Aubrey Williams, "Statement Submitted to the Sub-Committee of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, 76th Congress," National Youth Administration, 1940, p. 5, manuscript. See also Letter No. Y-79, June 16, 1939, and Letter No. Y-79, Supplement No. 1, November 2, 1939, which contain instructions and regulations for the setting up of work projects, National Youth Administration, Washington, D. C., mimeo.

of large numbers of youth to enter the white-collar occupations. It is a serious question, however, whether such "socially useful" projects are justified from the point of view of the occupational future of the youth, in view of the overcrowded condition of some of these occupations. On the other hand, state youth administrators, perhaps because of this conflict, fail at times to plan or consult with the communities in which the projects are to be conducted, with the result that the community becomes suspicious of, or even unfriendly to, the NYA as a whole.

Evidences of such conflict are contained in the reports of the NYA, showing the distribution of the youth by types of projects. The NYA has been operating over 14,000 projects during the past year or so. No precise or detailed information is available as to the number or size of these projects in different states, counties, or cities, but the reports published by the NYA indicate the number of boys and girls taking part in the various projects by states and type of project. An examination of these figures reveals the fact that in general during the past two or three years boys have been employed primarily on building projects and girls have been engaged primarily in clerical assistance projects and secondarily in sewing and homemaking projects.

The reports also indicate that until the last few months, there was increasing concentration on white-collar projects. This has been changed as a result of projects connected with national defense.<sup>2</sup>

The tendency toward a large proportion of white-collar employment is confirmed by the data presented in the report on the NYA of New York state. According to that report, out of 10,400 youth, only 2,870 were assigned to labor, and 240 to manual crafts. On the other hand, the number assigned to recreational projects was 2,700 and the number assigned to recreational, library, and public service combined was 5,600, or almost 55 per cent.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> For details see Appendix Tables XVI, XVII, and XVIII, pp. 169-71.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas G. Haring, "The Personnel Record Study" (Syracuse: New York State Youth Administration, 1938). Manuscript.

*Work Projects for Girls*

Another problem which has been stressed by the NYA itself is that of the limitations of the work projects for women. In setting up such projects, the NYA pursues "two basic objectives,"

TABLE 7

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF GIRLS ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROJECTS, JANUARY 1940, PLACEMENTS OF GIRLS BY JUNIOR PLACEMENT DIVISIONS OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OFFICES, FISCAL YEAR 1939-40, AND GIRLS GAINFULLY EMPLOYED IN 1930<sup>a</sup>

Employed in out-of-school program by type of projects		Placements by junior placement divisions		Gainfully employed girls under 25 years of age	
Occupation	Per cent	Occupation	Per cent	Occupation	Per cent
All occupations.....	100.0	.....	100.0	.....	100.0
Clerical and service..	40.3	Domestic and per-		Clerical.....	24.8
Sewing.....	14.8	sonal.....	46.0	Domestic and per-	
Resident projects....	10.6	Mercantile.....	22.0	sonal service....	21.2
Homemaking.....	7.5	Clerical.....	15.0	Manufacturing and	
Public health and		Factory.....	10.0	mechanical in-	
hospital.....	5.5	Labor.....	3.0	dustries.....	20.3
Recreational leader-		Skilled trades.....	2.0	Professional service.	12.6
ship.....	4.7	Messengers.....	1.0	Trade.....	7.9
Library service and		Professional.....	1.0	Agriculture.....	9.5
book repair.....	3.9			Transportation and	
Nursery schools....	3.5			communication...	3.7
School lunches.....	3.4			Public service.....	<sup>b</sup>
Arts, crafts, music,					
drama, writing....	1.5				
Workshops.....	1.4				
Miscellaneous pro-					
duction.....	0.7				
Other.....	2.2				

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Projects for Young Women*, Bulletin No. 4 (Washington: National Youth Administration, 1940), p. 2. Mimeo.

<sup>b</sup> Less than .05 per cent.

namely, to fit the girls "better to compete for employment in private industry and to function more effectively in family living."<sup>4</sup> Practically, this means that most of the projects for girls fall within the clerical and sewing classes. While this may be

<sup>4</sup>*Projects for Young Women*, Bulletin No. 4 (Washington: National Youth Administration, 1940), p. 1. Mimeo.

justified by the fact that a large percentage of employed women are in these occupations, the NYA projects tend to overemphasize the concentration, as is shown in Table 7.

### *Variety of Work Experiences Afforded*

The question of variety in range and scope arises with regard to work projects in general for both boys and girls. In rural areas or in small towns, it is often not possible to establish at the same time several projects offering different kinds of experience and training. Were several such projects in existence, it would be possible to shift the boys and girls from one to another, after some experience on each and thus offer a variety of work experience as a basis for a choice of occupation. The difficulties may be due to absence of industrial enterprise in the community, lack of necessary equipment, or local interest in immediate results. The youth in the cities and in the larger communities are usually better situated in this respect. The result is to accentuate existing inequalities of opportunity between urban and rural communities.<sup>5</sup>

### *General Considerations*

These problems are of a specific and practical character, but they imply general considerations with regard to social utility and local needs. Here, as in other social-economic matters, the short-run and long-run point of view are not always easily reconciled. What is of use to a local community today may be of but little importance in the long run and vice versa. Social utility cannot be judged only on the basis of material and immediate results. Most of the work projects, however, have such immediate ends in view. On the other hand, the training of young people and the building of their character are neither tangible nor of purely local interest. Their effects may not be felt until a much later date in the lives of the youth as well as in social

---

<sup>5</sup> The resident training centers have been devised to offset these differences in conditions. To what extent they have done so is considered in another report to the American Youth Commission, now in preparation.

relations, and the range of these effects certainly may and should be far beyond the confines of the local community.

The problem also involves large issues with regard to the best distribution of the labor supply, the degree of necessary and desirable labor mobility, the need for and possibilities of urban-rural migration, and other considerations which cannot be entered into here. But it is clear that the "integration of projects into the structure of the local community" is not simple, nor is it always the goal to be aimed at. It would be if the structural development of the locality were in its turn integrated with more general social-economic changes. This is, in a sense, the heart of the movement toward state and regional planning. To the extent to which the selection of work projects could be linked with such planning, a way might be found for meeting some of the difficulties indicated.

### THE TRAINING OF YOUTH

After the selection of work projects, their value for the training of youth depends upon their internal organization; a balance of the factors which affect the formation of work habits and the learning of work skills is needed. Questions which arise in this connection bear upon the assignment of youth to appropriate projects, the guidance of the youth workers on the projects and the proper supervision of their work, the relation of efficiency to training, the effects of part-time work, the effectiveness of "related training," and the relation of youth training to employment opportunities.

#### *Assignment to Projects*

The procedures of the NYA with regard to the assignment and guidance of the youth on their work projects are summarized as follows.

Before assignment to project work, each youth is interviewed to determine the type of work experience and training that would be of greatest benefit to him. Thereafter every effort is made to provide continual measurement and evaluation of the progress made by each youth worker. Reports are obtained from the project supervisor on their improvement or lack of improvement in efficiency and habits of work, appearance, and general conduct,



attitude toward work and fellow workers, willingness to take advantage of training and educational opportunities, and efforts to secure private employment. Initial reports are usually secured after the youth has been employed for one month. Subsequent reports are obtained as needed, but the progress of each youth is reviewed at least every six months.

On the basis of these reports and other information available to the project supervisor and the personnel staff, needed adjustments are made. Each youth is given work experience in as many fields as possible, so that he can more intelligently select the occupation which best suits his interest and aptitude. Often, the adjustment needed may be a transfer to a different type of work more in line with the youth's interest and ability. When there is evidence that a youth has received adequate benefit from his project work or there are other needy youth awaiting assignment, or when the youth has not made satisfactory progress in conduct or efficiency to merit his continuance, or where he is making no effort to secure private employment, the project work of the youth may be terminated.<sup>6</sup>

Little information is available as to how these procedures work out in practice.

### *Supervision*

As to the present supervision of the work projects, the NYA has this to say:

Supervisory personnel constitute 3.2 per cent of all persons employed on the NYA out-of-school work program, or approximately 30 youth to each supervisor. This number of supervisors seems unreasonably small, but on many projects the cosponsors provide all or most of the supervision. Also, since the youth only work part time, a project supervisor may take charge of several shifts of workers. In spite of these factors, the number of youth per supervisor on many projects is still too large to provide the individual attention that each youth should have. . . . The variation between states [in the ratio of the number of youth per supervisor] is caused largely by the different emphasis placed by the states on various types of projects and by the varying degrees to which cosponsors have been able to contribute to project supervision.

While a work program for adults requires that the workers be kept continuously occupied at their assigned tasks, a work program for youth demands a type of supervision which performs a training as well as a supervisory function. Project supervisory employees are adult workers paid on a monthly basis from project funds. They are in charge of the prosecution

---

<sup>6</sup> Williams, "Statement Submitted to . . . Committee on Appropriations," 1940, pp. 6-7.



of the work and training on NYA projects. Competent supervisors must necessarily be the foundation upon which the efficient execution of the program is built. Project supervisors must not only know how to direct workers on the actual operations of the project, but must also be qualified to act as counselors and advisers to the youth, to teach them good work habits and proper attitudes. As such, they must be able to approach sympathetically the problems of individual youths, and must be teachers as well as foremen.<sup>7</sup>

It may readily be seen that upon the quality of the project supervisors both the efficiency of the work and its training value depend in large measure. The NYA has not assembled much material to show the caliber, education, training, and ability of the men and women who supervise their youth projects. In general, supervisors vary greatly from state to state and from project to project.<sup>8</sup>

The variation in character and training of supervisors is due in part to the fact that many of them are not hired by the NYA. Local cosponsors often make their cooperation hinge on the condition that they be allowed to choose the local supervisor. As the NYA itself has limited funds for paying supervisors and is eager to keep the good will of the local community, the selection of supervisors by cosponsoring groups is agreed to in many cases. Often such supervisors are untrained, not particularly fit to guide youth, and not vitally interested in the work. Supervisors not selected by the NYA are found usually on clerical projects, in recreational leadership, or in library work. Projects on which the NYA supplies its own plant and equipment are usually supervised by persons whom the NYA itself selects.

---

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>8</sup> The general organization scheme is as follows: Under the state youth administrators are regional supervisors. (In some smaller states, area supervisors take their place; they have more duties and do all work instead of having assistants.) Under the regional supervisors there may be county supervisors. At the bottom is the local supervisor, and still closer to the project is the foreman who has the actual contact with youth at work on the project. It has been said that this creates too much administrative detail between the state offices and the local projects, and an effort has been made to do away with much of the intermediary work between local projects and the state office.

The fact that many supervisors are not so selected makes it difficult to impose uniform standards and training requirements on the entire supervisory staff.

The financial aspects of the problem are important. The salaries of supervisors in the NYA range from \$65 to \$120 a month, between \$2.50 to a little over \$4.00 a day. Considering this meager "pay status," many in the NYA feel that the general level of NYA supervisors is rather high.

The typical supervisor is a skilled worker over 45 years of age, who is too old to compete in the labor market but has considerable experience and familiarity with the trade. Many of the supervisors have a real interest in showing young people how to gain work experience. There are also a number of young men and women supervisors who are said to be enthusiastic about their work and eager to learn themselves while teaching the youth how to do things. Supervisors have many tasks in addition to their basic one, such as related training and guidance, keeping of records, and public relations.

There would seem to be two ways of dealing with the problem of supervision, namely, to hire better trained supervisors or to train those already on the job. These are not exclusive methods. The NYA is experimenting now with the second. Manuals are being prepared for the use of local supervisors and foremen, and conferences are held to initiate regional supervisors into their use. The regional supervisors are expected to pass on what they learn at these conferences—in administration, job analysis, and other aspects of their work—to the county supervisors and to the men who do direct supervision on the projects. The NYA hopes that these regional conferences will stimulate state conferences along similar lines, and that the cooperation of cosponsors in this task may be enlisted.

### *Efficiency versus Training*

In the effort to make the projects serve the needs of youth for training, the basic problem is that of combining adequate training with productive efficiency. This issue appears also in private industry, under apprenticeship agreements or in the case of begin-

ners and helpers, when employers may attempt to obtain the maximum of production from an apprentice or learner at the expense of the latter's personal development in the skills of the trade.

On public work projects the question may assume one of several aspects. It is possible, as is the tendency on some NYA projects, to pay less attention to efficiency of production and to concentrate on training. In such cases, boys and girls are shifted from job to job and from one operation to another on the job in order to give them a wider experience, though such procedure may hamper the execution of a project or increase its cost or lower its quality. However, such disregard for efficiency of production may in itself be a hindrance to training. Such work habits as accuracy, care in use of tools and materials to avoid unnecessary spoilage, maximum application of energy, and so forth are dependent, in large measure, upon the respect of the worker for the general efficiency of the job.

In the NYA itself much is made of the need to make the youth feel that they are doing something which is socially useful. Such a feeling, it is claimed, is essential for the morale of the youth and the success of the projects. There can be little doubt as to the validity of these statements. But it must also be kept in mind that the idea of a "socially useful" project is in a sense a "moral substitute" for the incentives of private industry.

In private employment, workers are not concerned with the social value of their product. That is supposed to be taken care of by the market and by the price mechanism. Workers may be, and are, highly efficient even in industries whose products are of doubtful social value. Their interest in their work and in efficiency is secured by wage incentives, by hiring and firing policies, and by related considerations. Also, beginners and learners in private industry apply themselves to learning their trade regardless of the moral quality of the product.

In stressing the social utility of a project the NYA is thus on new ground in work relationships. The question is, to what extent is this emphasis adequate for the purpose? True, to have educational value, the work must command the respect not only

of the youth employed but also of the public. At the same time, efficiency on the job, whatever the social utility of the projects, is a psychological prerequisite for the successful training of young workers. On the other hand, as sometimes occurs on NYA projects, project supervisors eager to get on with the job may sacrifice training for efficiency of production. If carried too far, this may destroy the *raison d'être* of the work program.

### *Effects of Part-Time Work*

Closely related to this question is that of the effects of part-time employment. Under the present organization of the NYA the youth are employed from 40 to 70 hours a month, depending upon the state. The number of hours worked varies greatly between the states, owing in part to variations in wage payments.<sup>9</sup> On the basis of four hours' work a day, NYA youth can work between 10 and 15 days a month. The alternatives are to spread the work through the month or to "bunch" it for 10 or 15 consecutive days. In the former case, there are the problems of accomplishing much during short periods of work, of increased overhead costs, and of difficulties of supervision. In the latter case, there are other difficulties, such as the pressure of finding projects which may be finished in 10 or 15 days, the need for having work done in several shifts, and the adverse effects on training of long intervals of idleness between jobs. Some of these difficulties may be offset by well-organized "related training" courses.<sup>10</sup>

### *Developing Employability*

Another important aspect of the problem of training is the capacity to enhance the "employability" of the youth in view of continuing industrial changes and occupational shifts. Leaving aside the question of the extent to which employability is itself a function of the state of business activity and of employment, the problem is one of adjusting the work projects both to higher technical levels and to a more complex economic outlook. To the

---

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 5 and a subsequent section of this chapter.

<sup>10</sup> The wage aspects of part-time employment are considered in Chapter 5.

extent that it is a function of competence and skill, employability involves two elements: (1) basic requirements in relation to work, and (2) specific capacities for performing definite operations. Conditions in industry are changing in such a way as to raise the level of both. In terms of general capacity for concentration and for adjustment, more is required today of a person in industry than formerly.<sup>11</sup> Also, finding a job and quick adjustment in learning different jobs presupposes more general education and more general training than formerly.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, specific skills are changing in character and are in many industries on a higher plane. A mechanic in a garage today is expected to know a great deal more about machinery and to be able to handle more delicate machinery than formerly.

Our methods of foreseeing occupational trends and of adjusting training to them are still incipient. In this respect, youth take the long-run hazard of preparing for what may be a vanishing opportunity. One way of meeting this problem may be by developing an occupational outlook service; another way is by developing training which would enable workers to be "multi-occupational." But it is necessary to point out here again that the organization of a work program entirely on a local basis and in dependence on local sponsors is a serious limitation in this respect. The training of youth must also be related to national economic developments as reflected in shifts of economic opportunity and of occupational needs in different sections of the country and in different industries.

---

<sup>11</sup> In view of the requirements of industry today, it has been claimed that some 10 per cent of all gainfully occupied persons and probably about one-third of the unemployed have an I.Q. which makes it difficult to place them in industry on an ordinary basis. But recent experiments show that much can be done with substandard persons if they are placed in industrial jobs where there is little change and where continuity of operations predominates. It has even been demonstrated by recent experiments with workers in the making of lace that mentally deficient persons can be employed productively under certain conditions.

<sup>12</sup> Important in this connection also is the sense of economic security on the part of the worker. A certain feeling of security is essential in finding a job and going through the first stages of adjustment. In so far as it gives young persons such a sense on their first entrance into industry, the NYA is performing an important function.



*Junior Guidance and Placement*

In its efforts to meet the problems indicated, as well as to aid its youth workers to obtain private employment, the NYA established and developed junior guidance and placement services in cooperation with state public employment services and the Bureau of Employment Security of the Social Security Board. (New York was formerly the only state whose employment service maintained a special division for junior workers.) The NYA set up these cooperative junior placement services and temporarily assumed financial responsibility for them in order to demonstrate the need for them and their value to youth. The general procedure was to establish such a service in a state upon request of the state youth administrator and of the director of the state employment service. In many cases they were gradually taken over by the state employment offices.

The junior placement services engaged junior counselors who received the applications of all job-seekers between 16 and 21 years of age and of those job-seekers between 21 and 25 years of age who had no work experience. The counselor's function was to consider the abilities and aptitudes of applicants and try to place them in private industry accordingly. The activities of the counselors were reported monthly to the state youth administrator, the director of the state employment service, the NYA office in Washington, and the Bureau of Employment Security.

At the end of January 1940 there were junior placement services in 187 cities in 41 states. Junior counselors were employed in about 100 offices. In 32 of these offices the salaries of the junior counselors were being paid entirely with funds of the state employment service. In the other cases, the NYA was giving financial assistance to the employment of junior counselors.<sup>13</sup>

Under the appropriation act of 1940-41, the NYA was prevented from engaging in placement activities, and these activities were accordingly discontinued on July 1, 1940. They are now carried on in a number of states by the state employment services.

---

<sup>13</sup> Information from NYA.



The question which arises now is whether the problems of training as well as of placement could not be more successfully handled if effective cooperation could be established between youth work programs and public employment offices. It is claimed that the public employment office would be the logical referral agency for the NYA and other youth programs. Trained junior counselors could best decide whether a youth should be employed by the NYA and, if so, which project or resident center best suits his interests and capacities. After a young worker leaves a center or project, the employment office is the logical medium for inducting him into private employment. In performing these functions, the employment office would obtain data on the requirements of specific jobs and on occupational trends in the community and could thus aid the NYA in setting up projects in harmony with local job situations and possibilities. Furthermore, the employment office could develop local and state occupational outlook studies which would provide a more solid basis for the prevocational work of the NYA.

There can be little doubt as to the possibilities and value of closer working relations between the NYA and the public employment offices. To make such cooperation effective, however, it would be necessary to extend the research and counseling functions of the employment offices and to develop a personnel equipped for this as well as for the other tasks of guiding and placing young workers. The division of these functions between the NYA and the employment offices is only in part an administrative problem. In large measure, it is a question whether all functions pertaining to the training, guidance, and placement of youth may best be performed when directed by an organization unified in spirit and outlook, and concerned entirely with the problems of youth.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> As an example of practical cooperation between the NYA and the public employment offices, one may cite the situation in the state of Michigan. Since August 1, 1939, the Michigan State Employment Service has acted as the sole certifying agent for the NYA in Michigan. The junior counselor of the Employment Service forwards directly to the NYA district employment supervisor a transcript of the individual's registration card. Each of the NYA district employment supervisors is a

For the time being, few state employment offices are in a position to handle effectively the guidance and placement of young workers. Even in those states which have developed a special junior program, facilities for putting the program into effect exist in the cities only. The possibilities of further development of such facilities and their integration with the work of the NYA call for further study.<sup>15</sup>

### *Related Training*

Until recently the NYA had arranged that youth on its work projects might have "related training" through academic courses in schools and otherwise. This phase of its work has been described in the following words:

In order to widen the types of work experience and training provided by the National Youth Administration, a program of informal class work and instruction has been organized to supplement project work. This related training program is being developed with the cooperation of local, state, and federal school authorities and educators. The youth employed on NYA projects attend classes or discussion groups that more fully explain the work they are doing on the project, or provide them with supplemental training that they would have received had they been able to continue in school. Courses in shop arithmetic, blueprint reading, stenography, farm shop work, bookkeeping, domestic science, and other courses of a similar nature, specially organized for youth who have left school, constitute the major part of the related training program. Also, there are courses in elementary school sub-

---

former employee of the Employment Service and is familiar with its procedures and methods.

During the entire period when a young person is on an NYA project, his application for employment is kept in the active file of the Employment Service and his NYA employment does not eliminate the possibility of his placement in private industry. The Employment Service thus participates both in the original selection of NYA workers and in their termination of NYA employment through placement in private industry.

Each of the 52 local public employment offices in Michigan has at least one person who is selected, trained, and designated as a junior counselor. Specialization for junior workers is practiced not only in connection with the interviewing and counseling. Registrations of juniors are made on a special form and broad occupational classifications are made on the basis of training, hobbies, interests, and so on, as well as work experience.

<sup>15</sup> For discussion of this subject, see Howard M. Bell, *Matching Youth and Jobs* (Washington: American Council on Education, 1940), pp. 69-91.

jects, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, made necessary by the fact that a considerable proportion of the unemployed youth have had little or no formal schooling.

Wherever possible the facilities of local school systems are utilized to provide related training courses. NYA project supervisors and foremen are often used as instructors, and public schools, vocational schools, the WPA Educational Division, state, county, and municipal government agencies, churches, settlement houses, Smith-Hughes and George-Deen funds have all contributed to the development of the related training programs within the states. Participation by the youth is voluntary, but wherever a complete related training program has been developed, the majority of the youth employees attend regularly. To encourage them to participate in this related training program, the hours in these related training courses are arranged to supplement the project work schedules and the subject matter is related as closely as possible to the work activities being carried out on the project.<sup>16</sup>

On August 21, 1940, the NYA announced that it had reached an agreement with the United States Office of Education to the effect that it will "hereafter depend entirely upon public schools for furnishing training, both academic and vocational, to out-of-school youth workers employed by NYA." This agreement delimited the functions of the NYA and of the Office of Education in such a way as to take related training out of the hands of the former.

Since the agreement was entered into, some difficulties of interpretation and application have arisen. There is no question as to the need and importance of related training in a youth work program. The question is by whom and how it shall be given. Since it is now largely a problem of administration and jurisdictional adjustment between government agencies, it is considered in Chapter 8.

### *Summary*

To sum up, the experience of the NYA illustrates the fact that, if the training of youth is to be effective, work projects must call for real work; there must be a reasonable degree of productive efficiency in its execution; it must be continuous and not spasmodic; it must provide a fair amount of diversity in its operations and

---

<sup>16</sup> Williams, "Statement Submitted to . . . Committee on Appropriations," 1940, pp. 21-22.

TABLE 8

SELECTED MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF NYA WORK PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC BUILDING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT, FISCAL YEAR 1939-40<sup>a</sup>

Type of project and item of accomplishment	Work completed		
	Unit of measurement	New construction or additions	Repair or improvement
<b>PUBLIC BUILDINGS</b>			
Administrative buildings.....	Number	58	306
Charitable, medical, and mental buildings			
Hospitals and clinics.....	Number	9	77
Isolation buildings.....	Number	31	11
Miscellaneous buildings.....	Number	9	121
<b>Educational buildings</b>			
Dormitories.....	Number	55	207
Libraries.....	Number	12	116
Schools.....	Number	324	3,872
Other educational buildings.....	Number	135	166
<b>Social and recreational buildings</b>			
Auditoriums.....	Number	9	95
Community buildings.....	Number	210	372
Gymnasiums.....	Number	41	201
Youth center buildings.....	Number	105	235
Other social and recreational buildings	Number	179	200
<b>Other public buildings</b>			
Agricultural buildings.....	Number	406	441
Street markets, roadside stands, booths, etc.....	Number	1,442	165
Workshop buildings.....	Number	125	156
Miscellaneous buildings.....	Number	368	604
<b>PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS</b>			
<b>Airport and airway work</b>			
Aircraft hangars and airport buildings	Number	14	54
Airway markers placed.....	Number	1,046	—
Landing fields.....	Number	6	14
Seaplane landing facilities.....	Number	96	3
<b>Road and street work</b>			
Bridges.....	Number	700	654
Culverts.....	Number	146,245	28,579
Curbs, gutters, and guard rails.....	Miles	150	76
Highways, roads, and streets.....	Miles	1,192	3,083
Parking areas and overlooks.....	Sq. yards	501,878	354,528
Roadside landscaping.....	Miles	1,659	—
Sidewalks.....	Miles	158	81
Street signs, other signs, and markers placed.....	Number	384,537	—
Traffic lines and zones painted.....	Miles	802	105

<sup>a</sup> Information from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

requirements; it must be properly supervised. Some of the difficulties with which the NYA is faced are due to limitations of funds, decentralization of projects, and local environment. But some are, in part at least, the result of the limitations under which projects are selected and of their internal organization.

### THE PROVISION OF USEFUL PUBLIC WORKS

Many of the projects carried on by the NYA are devised to provide work experience to the youth employed by aiding in the public improvements of the local communities. This applies particularly to public buildings, conservation, and recreational facilities projects.

#### *Present Public Works Projects*

According to the reports of the NYA, about one-third of the youth are employed on such projects, and the results of their work are considerable. In October 1940, about 6,000 youth worked on the improvement of grounds around public buildings—doing grading, sodding, and planting of shrubbery, trees, and flowers—and laying out or improving parks. Another 7,600 were assigned to highway, road, and street work, on which they graded and laid road surface, set curbs and sidewalks, and constructed culverts and bridges. A large part of the work on these road projects was directed to improving road safety by building guard rails, painting markers, and installing lights, signals, and other safety devices. Over 25,000 youth were engaged in constructing schools, recreation centers, and other public buildings.<sup>17</sup> Some of the physical accomplishments on the public building projects during the fiscal year 1939-40 are summarized in Table 8.

The improvement of recreational facilities occupied some 15,000 youth during October 1940. These workers built or improved athletic fields, playgrounds, grandstands, bleachers, tennis courts, swimming pools, and other facilities for public use; they also made or renovated the recreational equipment. Some of

---

<sup>17</sup> See Appendix Table XVII, p. 170.

the results of this type of work during 1939-40 are indicated in Table 9.

TABLE 9

RECREATIONAL STRUCTURES AND FACILITIES BUILT OR IMPROVED BY NYA, FISCAL YEAR 1939-40<sup>a</sup>

Type of facility or item of accomplishment	Unit of measurement	New construction or additions	Repair or improvement
Recreational structures			
Bandstands, bandshells, and outdoor theaters.....	Number	73	81
Park and trailside shelters.....	Number	694	324
Shower and dressing room structures...	Number	157	317
Stadiums, grandstands, and bleachers...	Number	360	568
Recreational areas and facilities			
Athletic fields.....	Number	506	939
Bridle, bicycle paths and trails.....	Miles	108	74
Fair and rodeo grounds.....	Acres	327	843
Golf courses.....	Number	23	54
Parks.....	Acres	23,030	20,127
Playgrounds.....	Number	747	1,706
Swimming and wading pools.....	Number	115	163
Tables and benches, fireplaces in picnic areas.....	Number	45,204	—
Tennis courts.....	Number	682	1,225
Other game or play courts.....	Number	1,021	539

<sup>a</sup> Information from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

Projects designed to further conservation, flood control, and sanitation employed during October 1940 about 5,000 youth in building check dams, terracing land, sodding gullies, carrying on reforestation, improving bird and game sanctuaries, establishing fish hatcheries, and setting up water supply and sewage facilities.<sup>18</sup> Some accomplishments in these and related fields for the fiscal year 1939-40 are given in Table 10.

It is not possible, on the basis of available information, to measure either the utility of this work to the local communities or the value of the training it afforded to the employed youth. Results have varied with projects and localities. The work has also met with varying reactions from employer and labor groups.

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix Table XVII, p. 170.



In general, it is felt that any defects in these projects are in a measure due to the lack of adequate planning, both local and central.

TABLE 10

SOME NYA ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN CONSERVATION AND SANITATION, FISCAL YEAR 1939-40<sup>a</sup>

Type of work	Unit of measurement	New construction or additions	Repair or improvement
Bird and game sanctuaries.....	Acres improved	11,556	10,060
Check and storage dams.....	Number	4,439	81
Fencing and snow fences.....	Miles	398	542
Fire observation structures.....	Number	10	70
Firebreaks and fire trails.....	Miles	1,527	96
Fish hatcheries.....	Number	895	75
Levees and retaining walls.....	Miles	27	24
Riverbank and streambed improvement..	Miles	1,014	—
Soil erosion control and landscaping.....	Acres	163,357	—
Stocking, fingerling fish.....	Number	137,477,746	—
Stocking, other game.....	Number	189,335	—
Trees planted.....	Number	7,006,040	—
Tree and plant nurseries.....	Acres	25,405	1,327
Drainage ditches and lines.....	Miles	102	110
Sanitary privies, cesspools, and septic tanks.....	Number	2,366	98
Sewer and water lines.....	Miles	133	19
Storage tanks, reservoirs, and cisterns....	Number	83	124

<sup>a</sup> Information from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

### *Further Possibilities in This Field*

Two questions may be raised in this connection. First, could more public works projects now carried on by other agencies appropriately be executed by youth? As is well known, the NYA, CCC, and WPA are not the only federal activities in the field of conservation and development of natural resources and construction of public works. The Treasury reports for July 2, 1940, that during the fiscal year 1939-40, \$951,000,000 was spent for public works in which there was no work-relief content.<sup>19</sup> These expenditures were for construction of forest roads and trails, reclamation, river and harbor improvement, flood con-

<sup>19</sup> U. S. Treasury Department Press Service No. 21-45, "Receipts and Expenditures, Actual for 1939 and 1940 . . .," July 2, 1940, Washington, D. C., p. 2.

trol, the Panama Canal, public buildings, public roads, and the activities of the Public Works Administration, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Rural Electrification Administration.

If some of these public works projects could be executed by youth, then an expansion of youth work programs could take place without materially increasing current expenditures for public works. There are many elements to be taken into consideration in connection with this possibility. One of them is the necessity for skilled work in many projects and the lack of necessary skills on the part of a large percentage of youth, as well as the various limitations on training youth in such skills which have been discussed above. Another is the best distribution of public works between the NYA, WPA, and regular government departments. While the displacement of older workers by youth on public works projects might be helpful to the individuals thus given employment, it might not better the general employment situation. On the other hand, it is possible that youth work programs might be adapted to some of the projects which now are being operated on a nonrelief basis, without injury to other age groups. Certainly consideration should be given to the possible enlargement of the share of public works projects to be executed by young people. It is also important to bear in mind that the main purpose of a youth program, which is preparation for private employment, may not be well served by a further extension of public works projects if the latter involve occupational processes which have no counterpart in private industry or if the corresponding fields in private business are already overcrowded.<sup>20</sup>

The other question is whether public works projects might not be improved and expanded by linking them with state and local planning activities. There were in 1939, according to the re-

---

<sup>20</sup> The elements of sex and race are highly important in this connection. As indicated above, sex and race differences are noticeable in the assignment of youth to work projects. That there are sex and race discriminations in private industry is well known. To transfer such discriminations into public employment on the ground that it is necessary to train youth in relation to the customs and procedures of private industry is, to say the least, a dubious policy.

port of the National Resources Committee,<sup>21</sup> 9 regional planning commissions, 42 state planning boards, and several hundred city and local planning bodies and groups. The work of the regional commissions is of a broad and comprehensive character involving long-range objectives.<sup>22</sup> The state planning boards, as research and consultative bodies, are conducting studies and surveys of highway development needs, recreational opportunities, population and industry, health conditions, taxation, condition of migrant workers, and educational needs, which are intended to serve as a basis for state development projects.

In the beginning, the state planning boards were aided materially by the federal work-relief agencies, which supplied staff personnel for them. As the planning program grew and the boards obtained funds of their own, WPA workers were not needed so much for regular staff work. Since 1937 the planning boards have applied for WPA workers only for special surveys and research projects. It is estimated that approximately two-thirds of the state planning boards use such workers today.

To what extent and in what way could the NYA youth be employed in connection with the studies and projects of the state and local planning bodies? The possibilities seem to lie along three lines:

1. NYA youth might assist on the staffs of the planning boards. This possibility is rather limited, and is probably more open to the college youth aided by the NYA than to those on out-of-school work projects.

2. The state planning boards might be able to use on some of their surveys NYA youth who have had clerical work or draftsmanship experience.

---

<sup>21</sup> See *Progress Report* (Washington: National Resources Committee, 1939), pp. 24-25.

<sup>22</sup> For instance, the New England Regional Commission has been studying three major projects: a system of airports, the development of recreational assets, and a highway system for New England. Other regional commissions are concerned with problems of river pollution, flood control, scientific forest management, land reclamation, irrigation and resettlement, and so on, according to regional conditions and needs. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

3. Local and state planning boards might find it possible to carry out some of their plans with the aid of the NYA.

At present many of these plans remain paper recommendations because of the shortage of labor and funds. Whether the NYA could organize projects on the basis of these recommendations with the aid of local communities and state governments calls for further examination. Two of the questions involved, besides those of funds, are whether the NYA youth would be skilled enough to do such work and whether the work would be beneficial to them in fitting them for jobs in private industry. If youth work projects could be connected with state and national planning developments, it would be possible, to that extent, to overcome some of the difficulties due to localism. It might also be possible to arouse the interest of the youth in the interrelated economic problems of the nation, such as "problem" areas, or conservation needs, thus strengthening both the economic and psychological motives which impart to work projects much of their training value.

#### PRODUCTION FOR USE

The largest hopes for an expanded youth work program are pinned by some on the possibilities of "production for use." This phrase has an attractive sound and seems to its advocates to hold a promise for the future.

The connotation of the phrase has undergone much change, and it is necessary to make clear what it means today, particularly with regard to a youth work program. "Production for use" originally was used only in contrast to production for private profit in general. In that sense, the phrase summed up the essence of a socialist or cooperative economic system as opposed to the present system of private enterprise. Used in such a broad way it was meant to include all proposals for reforming the "capitalistic" system of production and distribution with the view of setting up in its place a new system based on collective or cooperative principles of ownership and democratic methods of management. In this sense, "production for use" has been used at various times as a slogan by the Socialist Party, the Cooperative League

of the United States of America, the Farmer-Labor Party, and other political and social organizations.

The phrase came into wide use in the United States in a narrower sense in the years following the "Great Depression." Beginning with 1931, large numbers of unemployed in various parts of the country began to form self-help groups in order to provide themselves with work and the necessities of life. At first, the members of these self-help groups were engaged in bartering articles among themselves. Soon, however, they began organizing for production and assumed the character more or less of producers' cooperatives. These groups claimed to have as their purpose "production for use," not in the larger sense of aiming at a socialist reorganization of society, but in the much narrower one of producing articles for the use of their own members.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Recent History of Production-for-Use Groups*

In so far as current ideas on production for use, in the narrower sense, are influenced by the experience of the past ten years, it may be useful to summarize here briefly what this experience has been. During 1931-33, the self-help groups were largely barter and scrip exchange associations. They were composed of unemployed and needy persons who exchanged articles and services among themselves or with other groups as a means of obtaining food and other necessities. In some cases the procedure was very simple; for instance, unemployed men and their families would help farmers with their crops in exchange for a portion of what was gathered. In many parts of the country, however, a more complex system of "scrip exchange" was developed. Many self-help groups put their members to work on a variety of things, and the products were exchanged either among the members of the various groups or between the groups and outside persons. The workers in each group received, for each hour of labor, work certificates which they could exchange for groceries, clothing, furniture, and other commodities. Self-help programs

---

<sup>23</sup> Undoubtedly, many of those who joined the self-help groups were influenced by socialist ideas, and some may have thought that the groups might serve as an intermediate step toward a socialist society.



were often expanded to include also such services as barber and beauty shops, carpentry and house painting, and in some cases medical care and recreation.

The peak of this movement was reached in the spring of 1933 when the number of self-help groups was over 400 and the active membership approximately 75,000. The success of the movement up to this point was largely due to the fact that an adequate relief program had not yet been attempted in the country. Many of the unemployed entered the self-help groups as a means of staving off the direct forms of relief offered at that time. As the relief program of the federal government took shape in 1934, as public works projects provided employment for many workers, and as private employment increased, the self-help groups declined rapidly. The number of these groups dropped from 411 in June 1933 to 282 in December 1933, and to 264 in June 1934, with a slight increase in December of that year to 296.

In 1934, the second phase of the self-help movement began. Larger federal funds became available through the FERA for improving machinery and equipment. Self-help groups which had been started before were now encouraged to undertake productive enterprises under the supervision of the state relief administrators. About 200 of the earlier barter-and-exchange groups did so. In addition, a large number of new self-help groups were formed, especially in Idaho, Missouri, Utah, and Washington. By the summer of 1935, there were 255 such associations operating under federal grants, with a working membership of 12,200.

The federal program provided funds for equipment and insisted on the need for production standards if workers were to get better returns from their work. As a result, many workers who had formerly been benefited, such as the old and somewhat handicapped, were excluded on grounds of efficiency. Many of the new self-help associations became efficient producers, comparing favorably in size and organization with private enterprises of similar character. These self-help associations have been classed by many as producers' and consumers' societies. The comparison is not quite correct because (1) self-help groups did not supply their own capital; (2) they selected their mem-



bership on the basis of unemployment and need; and (3) they were not concerned with the larger aims of cooperation.

Toward the end of 1935, federal grants were discontinued, and the productive self-help associations began to decline. By the end of 1936 the total number of such groups was 218, and by the end of 1937 the total was down to 159. At the close of 1938 there were only 140 self-help organizations in the United States, with about 5,500 members. Over one-half of this aggregate membership was in the California associations.

In 1938, provision was again made for grants to aid self-help and cooperative association groups for the benefit of the unemployed. A clause in the 1938 Federal Relief Act provided that the funds might be used: (1) to pay wages of WPA workers detailed to serve in key positions in self-help projects, and (2) to pay for equipment, quarters, and materials to be used by such groups for productive purposes. The state WPA agencies were to handle all the funds instead of the groups themselves. Regulations were later adopted under which the disposal of goods was permitted: (1) to the members of the self-help groups; (2) in exchange with other associations; (3) in exchange with or sale to relief agencies; (4) by sale on the open market, provided the price at which items were sold did not result in unfair competition with privately produced articles of the same type. In order to qualify, self-help organizations were required to show that they operated under some public agency, that all their members had an equal voice in determining policies, that every member was certified as needy on the basis of approved WPA standards, and that the participants shared in the products or in the income from the products in proportion to the value of their labor.

These regulations tended to place the self-help groups under the control of relief administrators and made them directly responsible to the state relief office. For these and other reasons, no applications were made for federal aid by existing groups. Neither did the WPA encourage the formation of new groups. The whole movement has since been on the decline. The latest data available are for 1938, but it seems certain that the total

number and membership of self-help groups in the United States have decreased since that time.

Most of the self-help groups of the productive type still in existence are relief organizations. They obtain aid from federal and state funds and are under the supervision of the state relief administrators. In general, their products can be sold only to relief agencies to obtain the cash costs of operation. The largest part of the products, however, are still being exchanged among members or groups of members. In a few states only, such as Idaho, Missouri, Utah, and Washington, have the groups been allowed to sell their products in the open market. A few marketing cooperatives are operating in areas where farmers are particularly destitute, in Michigan, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

Another form of self-help enterprise that is still being operated with some success consists of community self-help exchanges, such as those in Washington, D. C., and Richmond, Virginia. These groups have been formed by committees of local citizens who supervise the activities and assist the council of workers. Members are usually workers who are in need of a supplementary income and persons who are not employable in private industry, as well as young persons who desire vocational training. A wide range of activities is carried on by these groups, with emphasis on individual rehabilitation rather than on efficiency in production. All products are distributed to members and outside aid is necessary for cash expenses and raw materials.

Between 1931 and 1939, over 600 self-help enterprises of the unemployed were organized in 37 states with a membership of over half a million. The activities of these self-help productive groups varied from place to place in accordance with the opportunities afforded by the surrounding country; the skill, capabilities, or ingenuity of the members; the equipment available or the equipment that could be made from available material; and so on. The program as a whole covered a wide range of industries, such as canning, sewing, lumbering, baking, dairying, furniture making, fuel wood cutting, gardening, household chemicals manufacturing, livestock raising, macaroni and spaghetti manufactur-

ing, poultry raising, rabbit and duck raising, soap making, syrup and candy making.<sup>24</sup> A few groups carried out some low-cost housing projects.

In view of the variety in organization, membership, and conditions of operation, the results of these various enterprises and experiments have been uneven. Some, as already indicated, met with more success than others. In general, however, the experience of the self-help movement between 1934 and 1939 reveals the difficulties and problems with which such experiments were confronted. In the first place, the working efficiency of these enterprises was hampered by their mixed and often ill-assorted membership which resulted in an unbalance of available skills, an undue proportion of old and handicapped workers, and a high turnover due to the attraction of higher wages and better employment conditions in private industry. Efficiency was further impeded by poor working conditions, irregularity of work, and lack of necessary capital and equipment. Second, the self-help groups could not solve the problem of distribution. Federal grants made to the groups limited the sale of products, as indicated above, with the result that the income of the members became insufficient to sustain even a minimum standard of living.

---

<sup>24</sup> The activities of many of these group enterprises are interesting. As an example of what one group accomplished, the association in southern California may be cited. This particular organization operated without the help of either federal or state funds. It was started in July 1932. In June 1937, its chief activities were: the exchange of labor with local business firms for foodstuffs; other operations including a wood project, salvaging, sewing, fishing, and the smoking of fish. Through an arrangement with a private bakery, members of the association received day-old bread in return for work on the bakery's grounds. Again they got unsold milk in return for assistance in nontechnical dairy operations. Through other agreements members received hospitalization, maternity service, and other medical care from the hospital. In addition, the association operated an employment agency, which found permanent jobs for various members. Salvaging activities included the collection of clothing, old newspapers, and wood for use and sale. Wood-cutting work enabled them not only to supply themselves with wood but to sell some too. Pillows, rag rugs, and quilts were made for the members' use by the sewing project. A group kitchen furnished noon meals to many of the members. Nearly all the clothing used by the members was furnished by the association through exchange and salvaging. Nearness to a variety of work materials (such as lumber or fish), the cooperation of the townspeople and businessmen, and efficient leadership played a large part in the success of this group.

In some cases, when markets were developed, the unfriendly pressure of private industry was so great that the groups had to stop production. The development of the self-help interchange market was impeded by lack of adequate information and of facilities for intercooperative exchange, unequal efficiency in the various units, lack of cash and the necessity of part-payment in cash for the purchase of raw materials, services, and commodities which could not be bought with members' labor. Furthermore, the connection of the groups with relief agencies was not always beneficial. When subsidized by state relief funds, they had to combine relief, production, training, and cooperative principles in one program, with rather confusing results. Public control tended to undermine the very principles of self-help on which the groups were founded, and the groups became a part of the public relief machinery.

It is generally recognized that the self-help organizations have been of great assistance to many individuals and families that might not have been reached by the relief agencies. They filled for a while the gap between work relief and direct relief for those persons who were unemployed and in need of public assistance but unwilling to accept direct relief. They also offered to certain groups of unemployed—older workers, handicapped workers, and underemployed workers with inadequate income—a chance to provide themselves with part or all of their needs through their own efforts. Last, but not least, they have been of social and educational value to large numbers of persons on the margin of the economic system.

On the other hand, the self-help enterprises have been criticized on the ground that: (1) they were often organized by "idealists" and wishful thinkers who regarded them as a panacea for all economic ills and, therefore, tried to steer them into unnavigable channels; (2) that they had no firm economic basis, lacking capital, skills, and a dependable market; (3) that they became too dependent on public relief funds and thus lost their impulse and capacity for self-direction; (4) that they were sometimes used to cover up antiunion movements and to combat organized

labor; and (5) that their economic effect on the national economy has been negligible, the volume of business done having been small and even the amount of savings in relief not great.<sup>25</sup>

### *NYA Production for Use*

The phrase "production for use," when used by the NYA, has the narrower meaning given to it by the self-help movement of 1934-39. It has no reference to an ultimate aim of reforming the existing system of production and distribution; it is not even connected with the ideas of consumers' or producers' cooperation which influenced the self-help enterprises. In the NYA vocabulary, "production for use" means the planning of projects for the production of articles which the youth themselves could use or which are to be turned over to relief and other public welfare agencies for distribution among the needy and underprivileged groups of the population.

The "production projects" of the NYA include the workshop and sewing projects and some of the others which result in articles for personal use and in services. In October 1940, nearly 60,000 youth of both sexes were employed on work such as salvaging and repairing furniture, designing and making all sorts of clothing and household articles, and preserving and canning foods. The products of these projects were distributed through local welfare agencies to public institutions and to families who otherwise would not have been able to obtain these products. School desks have been repaired or manufactured and donated to rural schools which would be unable to purchase such equipment. Some of the articles produced during the fiscal year 1939-40 are shown in Table 11.

---

<sup>25</sup> For much of the material contained in this discussion the writer is indebted to Peyton Kerr's unpublished report, "Self-Help Cooperatives 1931-39." For further details see also the following articles in *Monthly Labor Review*: "Production by Self-Help Organizations of Unemployed," XXXIX (July 1934), 25-30; "Self-Help among the Unemployed in California," XLI (December 1935), 1504-9; "Self-Help Activities of the Unemployed," XLVII (July 1938), 1-18; "Self-Help Cooperative Housing," XLIX (September 1939), 566-77; "Self-Help Organizations in the United States, 1938," XLIX (December 1939), 1335-47. See also William Beard, *Create the Wealth* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1934), Chap. VIII.



The practical difficulties which stand in the way of an expansion of production for use on NYA projects are the same which hampered the self-help movements, namely, problems of the distribution of the product, of the opposition of private industry, and of efficient technical organization. These difficulties derive added strength from the objections to a production-for-use program which are inherent in our general ideas on the operation of our economic system.

TABLE 11

ARTICLES PRODUCED ON NYA WORKSHOP, SEWING, AND OTHER PROJECTS,  
FISCAL YEAR 1939-40<sup>a</sup>

Type of article	Unit of measurement	Work completed
Airport markers (windsocks, boundary, and range cones) made.....	Number	3,408
Canning and preserving.....	Pounds	1,366,518
Clothing produced or renovated.....	No. of articles	1,777,666
Concrete blocks and precast concrete.....	Number	1,208,850
Copper and tin gutters and spouts constructed.....	Linear feet	18,379
Crushed stone, sand, and gravel produced.....	Cubic yards	256,074
Enamelware produced.....	No. of articles	998
Firewood cut.....	Cords	189,803
Foodstuffs produced.....	Pounds	2,956,800
Furniture constructed or repaired.....	No. of articles	729,940
Hospital supplies, bandages, etc.....	No. of articles	8,289,213
Household articles, bedding, rugs, etc.....	No. of articles	478,466
Lumber produced.....	Board feet	3,572,355
Museum articles catalogued.....	Number	295,693
Museum articles prepared or renovated.....	Number	174,292
Recreational and playground equipment constructed or repaired.....	No. of articles	62,502
School lunches served.....	Number	25,712,089
Shoes repaired.....	No. of pairs	24,098
Tools and mechanical equipment constructed or repaired..	Number	81,956
Toys made or renovated.....	Number	628,908
Window and door sashes, frames and screens.....	Number	27,869

<sup>a</sup> Information from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

In our consideration in an earlier chapter of basic concepts, it was observed that for a number of years the national government has been faced with "the question of what to do with the productive capacity of the unemployed." Inasmuch as the unemployed possess potential productive capacity but lack purchasing power, on the surface it would seem that it would be possible to generate the latter by utilizing the former, that is, to set the

unemployed to work producing for themselves and exchanging among themselves what they need in the way of food, clothing, shelter, and comforts. As many of the unemployed seem to have been jolted out of our economic machine and to have become just a burden that the rest of the nation must carry, at first blush a method of having them provide for themselves and their dependents sounds ideal.

When the matter is examined further, however, it is found that, under our present way of looking at and doing things, the one thing the unemployed can not be allowed to do is to produce the material for their own living. The fact is that the unemployed and their dependents, while not part of the productive mechanism, are *not* outside of our economic system, but are an essential part of it, being consumers of a portion of the production of the employed. Small as the individual consumption of an unemployed family may be, the aggregate consumption of the millions of individuals involved is very large. If those who are at work should be deprived of this outlet for their production, automatically a new group of unemployed would be created, and the economic situation would be aggravated. Production for use would therefore appear to be ruled out by the limitation on work projects for public youth work programs that they must not produce anything which would place them in competition with the employed.

Another limitation on production for use arises from the fact that such production, on a considerable scale, would involve all types of labor, skilled as well as unskilled, while, under our present arrangements, participants in public youth programs must not, with a few exceptions, perform skilled work, nor be trained for it. Here again, the first reaction to such a limitation is that it is absurd. Yet, in the first case, the performance of skilled work, even on projects which would not be executed otherwise, is regarded as a threat to skilled workers generally, to their wage scales and working standards, as well as a denial of opportunity to those of them who are unemployed but not participants in work-relief programs. In the second case, intensive and adequate training calculated to produce skilled workers would result in

overflowing the labor market in various trades, with depressing effects on wages. It is for these reasons that, in the CCC, construction of the camp buildings is not carried on by enrollees but by outside professional labor and that many phases of projects in the NYA call also for the employment of outside workers receiving standard rates of pay.

In brief, a production-for-use plan more than any other type of public youth work program is hedged about with many serious limitations. There are frontiers beyond which public works programs may not stray in order to avoid conflict with the general structure of our social-economic life. When they exceed their bounds, trouble develops, although in practice it is impossible to stay entirely within them.

Nevertheless, production for use need not be ruled out entirely.<sup>26</sup> Youth work programs, if extended in the future, might be in a better position to overcome some of the practical difficulties which the self-help organizations could not master. Many suggestions are contained in the experience of various states and of other countries. There is also a challenge to youth work programs to find ways in which production for use might be incorporated in our social-economic system, as a supplementary mechanism. Some of the main tasks would seem to be: (1) to compute a program of production to meet the elementary deficiencies of marginal and submarginal families as well as of public institutions (for example, schools) which are not likely to become part of the effective demand of the market for a certain period, say three or five years; (2) to obviate the opposition of private industry by arranging that the value of articles distributed

---

<sup>26</sup> The American Youth Commission has strongly recommended production for use: ". . . one type of work which would be a true service to the community and which should be greatly expanded would consist of producing the goods and services which are needed by the young people themselves and by others who are unemployed and in need. The Commission does not regard this as competition with private business. . . . In any event, it is far preferable to unemployment or to the levels of taxation which would be necessary to support a decent level of subsistence for those in need if they are not to be allowed to do anything for themselves."—*A Program of Action for American Youth* (Washington: American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, October 1939), p. 9.

should not exceed a specified amount or proportion of the national output of the respective commodities; (3) to stress the training value of the production-for-use projects, so that the supply will be limited by costs; (4) to alternate the distribution of the articles made among different consuming groups in such a way as to develop consumption habits that may be maintained after the subsidies are withdrawn; and (5) to study ways in which some of the needs of national defense, as well as the consumption needs of groups of the population that do not benefit from added industrial activity due to national defense, might supply a basis for "production projects."

---

## 5

# WAGES, EMPLOYMENT, AND SOCIAL POLICY

---

WHATEVER ITS objectives and on whatever scale conducted, a youth work program carries within itself elements of an employment relationship which gives rise, among other questions, to that of the relation between production and payments made. However, since the funds are public and the objectives are social, employment relations must differ from those prevailing in private industry. This means that a youth work program must find its own answers to such questions as these: What is a reasonable scale of wages? What is an appropriate wage policy for the youth employed? What standards of employment should be maintained? What policies of social welfare may be pursued?

These questions are being discussed today in connection with the out-of-school program of the NYA. It is thus convenient and suggestive to take the practices of the NYA with regard to wages, hours of work, and employment as a starting point for a consideration of the problems involved.

### RULES AND PRACTICES OF THE NYA

The NYA regulations governing wages and employment are geared to the provision that the youth are to be given part-time work only. The number of hours of work for the youth employed on projects may not exceed 8 in one day, 40 in one week, and 100 during a month. The exact number of hours of work is fixed for each state by the state administrator.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> For the regulations discussed here see *Administrative Order No. 5* (Washington: National Youth Administration, September 15, 1939), mimeo; and *Handbook of Procedures Memorandum No. 7* (Washington: National Youth Administration, September 16, 1940), mimeo.



While hours of work are set locally, the scale of maximum monthly payments is fixed by the national office. Three wage regions are recognized and are arranged in such a way that 18 states in which the cost of living is highest are in Region I; 22 states and the District of Columbia in which the cost of living is next to the highest in order are in Region II; and 8 states (in the South) in which the cost of living is lowest are in Region III.<sup>2</sup> Project workers are further divided into two classes: Class A and Class B. Class A receives higher wages than Class B and consists of young persons acting as junior foremen or supposedly doing more specialized and skilled work. Workers in Class B do regular project work. The schedule provides that at least 95 per cent of the total youth employees in a state shall be paid in accordance with the Class B schedule of earnings. There is no other provision for wage differences according to type of work.

---

<sup>2</sup> The states included in each region are as follows:

<i>Region I</i>	<i>Region II</i>	<i>Region III</i>
California	Arizona	Alabama
Connecticut	Colorado	Arkansas
Illinois	Delaware	Florida
Indiana	District of Columbia	Georgia
Maine	Idaho	Louisiana
Massachusetts	Iowa	Mississippi
Michigan	Kansas	South Carolina
Minnesota	Kentucky	Tennessee
New Hampshire	Maryland	
New Jersey	Missouri	
New York	Montana	
Ohio	Nebraska	
Oregon	Nevada	
Pennsylvania	New Mexico	
Rhode Island	North Carolina	
Vermont	North Dakota	
Washington	Oklahoma	
Wisconsin	South Dakota	
	Texas	
	Utah	
	Virginia	
	West Virginia	
	Wyoming	

Monthly wage payments on NYA nonresident projects until recently varied from \$12 to \$21 in continental United States.<sup>3</sup> The maximum monthly payments to these youth were increased as of August 1, 1940, and they now range from \$14 to \$24 per month in the various regions.<sup>4</sup> On the basis of monthly earnings fixed by the national office and the hours of work fixed by state youth administrators, the NYA computes average wage rates per hour. These are obtained by dividing total earnings by total number of hours worked for each state. Both the average number of hours worked per month and average hourly earnings vary greatly between the states. In October 1940 the average monthly hours worked on nonresident projects ranged from 37 in Rhode Island to 77 in New Hampshire, and the average hourly earnings varied from 18 cents in Arkansas and Florida and Mississippi to 40 cents in Wisconsin.

#### REGIONAL DIFFERENTIALS IN HOURLY RATES

The differentials in the NYA wage regulations go back to the beginnings of the NYA, when it was part of the WPA. The regions recognized by the NYA can be traced to those which the WPA had made for drawing up its own wage scale. Originally, occupational differentials, such as classifications into professional, skilled, semiskilled, and the like, were also taken over from the WPA in spite of the fact that most workers on the NYA projects were untrained and did not readily fall into such classifications. The latter were often used by NYA project supervisors as a means of getting more hours of work on certain projects or of giving more money to certain groups. Since the separation of the NYA from the WPA, most of these differentials have been abandoned. Those retained now are based on state-and-regional classifications.

---

<sup>3</sup> Appendix Table XIX, p. 172, shows average amounts earned by youth workers in the various states and territories. These amounts are in many cases below the general wage payment for the region concerned because of hours lost for sickness or similar reasons.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix Table XX, p. 174, which also shows some average earnings below the regional wage schedule.

The differentials still retained in NYA wage payments give rise to doubts as to their validity or social justification. The present division of the states into regions has been questioned, and many state administrators have suggested that there be a new grouping on the basis of more recent studies of costs of living. For instance, the District of Columbia is classified in Region II, but since that classification was made living costs in the District have materially risen, presumably justifying its inclusion in Region I, with higher wage payments.

The practice of the NYA results in wide variations of hourly earnings between the states. As pointed out, the state administrators fix hourly earnings indirectly by fixing the number of hours to be worked. In setting the hours so as to obtain a certain hourly wage, the state administrators are known to be subject to various local pressures (such as the desire of unions to maintain hourly wages at a high level or that of manufacturing and farming groups who want a low wage level), to local political conditions, and so on. The hours worked on nonresident projects in October 1940 ranged from 70 or over in seven states in Regions I, II, and III to less than 40 hours in Rhode Island (Region I).<sup>5</sup>

The procedure for computing hourly wages in the NYA has been criticized on the grounds that it leads to confusion and that it affects the policy of state administrators in fixing hours of work. The desire to show high hourly earnings results in reducing hours to a point where it often becomes difficult, if not impossible, to give young people worth-while projects and working experience. On the other hand, long hours may undermine established hourly rates as the measure of labor value in industry.

In comparing hourly wages paid by the NYA with hourly earnings in private industry, principally with the wages paid to learners and apprentices and to unskilled laborers newly entering industry, it is seen that, with few exceptions, the NYA hourly

---

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix Table XXI, p. 177. These practices are also traceable to the WPA which, in the beginning, had set up few regulations as to hours, leaving final decisions in the matter to state administrators.

wages are far lower than those paid the workers referred to above in any branch of industry.<sup>6</sup>

### ADEQUACY OF MONTHLY EARNINGS

The youth employed on NYA projects are concerned not so much with hourly rates as with total monthly payments. The latter determine the addition which they can make to the family income and the degree to which they can maintain their customary level of living.

In the case of the monthly payments, as with regard to hourly earnings, the regional differentials have been questioned. They are not justified by differences in living costs and tend to perpetuate sectional inequalities which should be discouraged. The tendency in the NYA is to do away with these differentials gradually. The NYA has also recognized that the present monthly payments for all the regions are too low and should be raised. As already pointed out, the schedule of maximum monthly payments for 1940-41 has been fixed between \$14 and \$24 a month.

Whether these earnings are adequate involves the question of the basis on which adequacy is to be judged. Several possibilities suggest themselves. The NYA monthly payments might be compared with earnings of young workers in private industry. The data available on weekly earnings in various industries cover workers of all age groups and skills. If it be assumed that beginners, learners, and other young workers are paid from 50 to 75 per cent of the regular wage, some idea may be obtained as to the weekly earnings of these groups with which NYA youth may be compared. Weekly earnings, however, do not give any idea as to the monthly or annual incomes of the workers.

If the NYA monthly payments be compared with those of the WPA the picture is not favorable. A young worker on WPA projects is paid a "security wage" of \$53, on the average, which is from two to three and a half times more than the NYA upper and lower wage limits, respectively. The young WPA worker is the head of a family, while the NYA worker is presumably

---

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix Tables XXII, XXIII, XXIV, and XXV, pp. 178-81.

a subsidiary earner in a family group and his earnings are supposed to be devoted to his own needs. This assumption, however, is not valid for a large proportion of the NYA youth, as is shown by Tables 14, 15, and 16 (pages 91-92).<sup>7</sup>

TABLE 12

WEEKLY SALARY RECEIVED ON PREVIOUS "BEST JOB" OF YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES AND ALL RACES ON NYA ROLLS IN NEW YORK STATE, JULY-DECEMBER 1936<sup>a</sup>

Weekly salary on best job	Number receiving salary
Total youth studied.....	10,400
Under \$4.00.....	412
\$5- 5.99.....	484
6- 7.99.....	453
8- 9.99.....	353
10-11.99.....	419
12-13.99.....	550
14-15.99.....	513
16-17.99.....	175
18-19.99.....	272
20-21.99.....	169
22-23.99.....	90
24 and over.....	237
Never worked.....	6,231
No information.....	42

<sup>a</sup> Data from Douglas G. Haring, "The Personnel Record Study" (Syracuse: New York State Youth Administration, 1938), Vol. II, p. 72 and Table W-37-47 (48)-S. Manuscript.

As to the earnings which NYA youth might obtain in private industry, the information is very scanty, but some of the available data are suggestive. In preparing the report on NYA youth of New York state for 1936,<sup>8</sup> cited in the preceding chapter, the investigators asked a question as to the salary which the young persons had received on their "best job" before joining the NYA. The replies, as tabulated, show that out of 10,400 NYA youth, 6,231 had not worked before. Of the 4,127 who were known to have worked, about 1,700 had earned less than \$10 a week; about 1,480 youth had earned from \$10 to \$16 a

<sup>7</sup> See also Chapter 8, p. 128.

<sup>8</sup> Douglas G. Haring, "The Personnel Record Study" (Syracuse: New York State Youth Administration, 1938). Manuscript.



week; some 450 from \$16 to \$20 a week; and almost 500 had earned \$20 a week or over. The details are shown in Table 12.

The wages given in Table 12 were paid for a varying number of working hours. As may be seen from Table 13, of the slightly over 4,000 youth who had worked, 575 had been employed 20 hours a week or less, while the majority had put in from 20 hours to 70 hours a week.

TABLE 13

WEEKLY WORKING HOURS ON "BEST JOB" HELD BY YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES AND ALL RACES BEFORE NYA EXPERIENCE IN NEW YORK STATE, JULY-DECEMBER, 1936<sup>a</sup>

Hours worked per week	Number of NYA youth
Total youth studied.....	10,400
1- 5.....	38
6-10.....	304
11-15.....	137
16-20.....	96
21-25.....	115
26-30.....	175
31-35.....	173
36-40.....	922
41-45.....	369
46-50.....	879
51-69.....	625
70 and over.....	261
No information.....	6,306 <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Data from Haring, "Personnel Record Study," Vol. II, p. 73 and Table W-37-38.

<sup>b</sup> Includes 6,231 youth without previous jobs.

It is difficult to assess the adequacy of NYA payments with regard to the needs of youth for maintaining customary standards of living. It is not known how youth spend their money, and adequacy in this respect is affected by local conditions, community patterns, social customs, and other factors. There is no doubt from the fragmentary data available that the NYA earnings are an important factor in family income. The report on the NYA of New York state, quoted above, shows that out of 10,400 youth about 12 per cent had some other persons fully dependent on them and about 85 per cent had someone partially dependent. The details are shown in Tables 14 and 15.

TABLE 14

DEPENDENCY OF OTHERS ON NYA YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES AND ALL RACES, NEW YORK STATE, 1936, AS REPORTED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE<sup>a</sup>

Extent of dependency of some other person upon the young person	Number reporting		
	Total	Males	Females
Total youth studied.....	10,400	6,059	4,341
Fully dependent.....	1,217	806	411
Partially dependent.....	8,789	5,027	3,762
No one dependent.....	341	190	151
No information.....	53	36	17

<sup>a</sup> Data from Haring, "Personnel Record Study," Vol. II, p. 49.

TABLE 15

COMPARISON OF DEPENDENCY OF OTHERS ON WHITE NYA YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES, NEW YORK STATE, ACCORDING TO NYA STATUS, DECEMBER 3, 1936<sup>a</sup>

Extent of dependency of some other person upon the young person	Total	Had left NYA	Still on NYA
Total youth studied.....	9,926	2,360	7,566
Fully dependent.....	1,173	331	842
Partially dependent.....	8,393	1,916	6,477
No one dependent.....	310	101	209
No information.....	50	12	38

<sup>a</sup> Data from Haring, "Personnel Record Study," Vol. II, p. 49.

The same report also shows that of the 10,400 NYA youth studied 5,527 boys and men and 4,044 girls and women (or a total of 9,571) lived with their parents, and 417 (both sexes) lived with relatives. Of the 9,926 young persons (white) only 663 contributed less than 50 per cent of their earnings to the support of the family, as Table 16 shows.

It would thus seem that the majority of NYA youth must contribute enough to the family income to pay at least for their own support. What is required for this, on the maintenance level of living, can be roughly estimated, on the basis of avail-

able data on family and per capita income.<sup>9</sup> According to the figures on income distribution, given in Table 3, Chapter 3, 5,469,000 nonrelief families in the United States had in 1935-36 an annual income of less than \$750. Of the more than 699,000 nonrelief families with an annual income of less than \$250, about 125,000 were composed of five persons or more. This would mean that in these 125,000 families the per capita income was less than \$50 a year. Even in the \$500-\$750 income group some 800,000 families consisted of five or more persons. This means that 800,000 families in this income group had an annual per capita income of \$150 or less.

TABLE 16

WHITE NYA YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES, NEW YORK STATE, 1936, DISTRIBUTED ACCORDING TO PER CENT OF EARNINGS CONTRIBUTED TO FAMILY INCOME <sup>a</sup>

Per cent of earnings contributed to family	Number of NYA youth
Total youth studied.....	9,926
Less than 10.....	8
10-19.....	73
20-29.....	243
30-39.....	104
40-49.....	235
50-59.....	2,787
60-69.....	1,345
70-79.....	1,661
80-89.....	823
90-99.....	890
100.....	1,445
No information.....	311

<sup>a</sup> Data from Haring, "Personnel Record Study," Vol. II, Tables No. 4-3, 2-5, 3-80-D, pp. 184-92.

Youth who remain on NYA work projects for a year receive between \$120 and \$240 in wages. The average annual payment per person is about \$180 a year. A survey of seven states indicated that 29 per cent of the youth who were employed on out-of-school work projects in February 1939 had been employed

<sup>9</sup> See, for instance, Margaret Loomis Stecker, *Intercity Differences in Costs of Living, 1935* (Washington: Works Progress Administration, 1937) and the previously cited study, *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (Washington: National Resources Committee, 1938).

for 12 months or more. For youth remaining on projects from 6 to 12 months, the payments received would compare favorably with the annual amount of money which can be spent for an individual boy or girl in a quarter of the nonrelief families in the United States.

### ELEMENTS OF A "YOUTH SECURITY WAGE"

In fixing wages in business, employers are concerned with certain elements which are regarded as essential, namely, the standardization of wage rates, the reduction of labor costs per unit of product, and the correlation of earnings with output so as to stimulate individual efficiency and to allow for the advancement of some workers and the elimination of others. Various devices and methods of wage payment have been evolved for this purpose, including piece work and the manifold varieties of bonus and premium systems. These aims of a wage policy are recognized also in schemes of union-management cooperation and in agreements between employers and trade unions, though the means used to achieve the purpose may differ. In most cases, provisions are also made for the adjustment of differences with regard to wages which may be regarded as part of the mechanism of wage fixing. In general, private firms aim to correlate wages with the length of time required to learn the occupation, the time required to develop skill and experience, the scarcity of the labor supply, the educational content of the job, the physical labor involved, the effects of errors in production, the degree to which supervision is required, the capacity of the worker to do teamwork, various expenses of the worker caused by his working conditions, and prevailing rates of wages in other industries.

Private industry has always drawn a more or less sharp line between the wages of an adult and those of a young worker. On the assumption that the head of the family is the main, if not the only, breadwinner, the earnings of juvenile workers have been regarded either as supplementary or as those of a learner and beginner. The fixing of wages in private industry is a difficult and expensive process. Despite the ingenious devices

of "scientific management," the wage-setting process is today still largely a wrangle, owing to the lack of accurate calculations of the effects of the factors involved, such as age, sex, health, speed, and skill, and it results in many inequalities of wage rates for which no adequate reason can be given.

Differences in wages, as between different occupational groups, are due to the unequal natural endowment of individuals, to inequalities of educational and economic opportunities, to the relative scarcity of particular kinds of skill, to the relative esteem in which occupations are held, to regularity of employment, to bargaining strength, and to other factors. The economic functions of a wage policy (besides providing work incentives) are to allocate workers to different industries in accordance with the demand for labor, to increase or decrease the regional and occupational mobility of labor, to influence the supply of labor and its composition, and to relate costs to prices.

In the light of these general principles, the rules governing payment on NYA projects can be said to constitute a wage policy only in a very loose sense of the term. It is possible to claim, for instance, that the youth on NYA out-of-school work projects are so selected as to represent a more or less homogeneous group of workers with few differences in skill and experience, and that a straight fixed monthly payment to them represents time wages. It may even be claimed that formally the youth are entering into a bargain with the NYA to the extent that any individual youth is free to refuse work on any project and to leave when he is dissatisfied. The NYA implies this in its reports on what it calls "the labor turnover." And it is further possible to assert that the NYA does maintain some relationship between individual efficiency and payments made. But, as pointed out in preceding chapters, there are many qualifying factors.

The result is that the payments on NYA projects are based on mixed considerations. As most of the youth are needy, their capacity for leaving a project is at a minimum. Monthly payments and hours of work are fixed by rules in which they have no voice. In selecting youth workers, the administrators vacillate between the desire to select the more efficient and the more



needy. The monthly payments are not entirely correlated either with budgetary needs or with work done; they reflect in large measure the traditional principle of "less eligibility," according to which relief conditions should be less desirable than those in private employment. As work programs do not produce for the market, the principles of accounting are not applicable, and there is no way of establishing a relationship between wages, labor costs, and prices.<sup>10</sup>

In so far as the government shapes wage policy by minimum wage laws or wage-raising devices, it aims to inject a social purpose to prevent "sweating," to establish the principle of a "living wage," to minimize industrial disputes, to redistribute income, or to promote recovery. In so far as the social purpose of a youth work program is to correct the inequalities affecting the industrial status and opportunities of youth, its wage policy must be directed toward equalizing educational opportunities, improving environmental influences, giving greater dignity to all forms of labor, and correcting the economic deficiencies that affect the occupational choice of the youth.

To sum up, it is more practical as well as theoretically more correct to recognize that the payments to youth on public work programs are in the nature of a "social supplementary wage" or a "youth security allowance." In accordance with the purpose underlying it, such a wage or allowance should be fixed on the basis of some recognized minimum standard of living and as a reasonable proportion of wages in private industry for the same age groups. It would seem best to discard computations of hourly rates, since they are more or less artificial. It might be desirable to vary the monthly payments on a regional basis, either to take account of differences in living costs or to equalize wide divergencies in living conditions. The value of using the term "wages" is

---

<sup>10</sup> Youth work programs raise, however, questions of cost, namely, (a) the cost per person in relation to the cost of direct relief; (b) the cost per youth worker in relation to the cost of training him or her elsewhere; (c) the cost of maintenance in relation to an accepted minimum standard of living; and (d) the cost per person in relation to total expenditures and the policy of aiding the largest possible number of those in need. These questions are considered in Chapter 8.

largely psychological; it implies a return for services rendered and a possibility of economic security.<sup>11</sup>

### MAINTENANCE OF WORKING STANDARDS

The maintenance of recognized working standards on some 14,000 work projects, employing about 300,000 young persons, is obviously a considerable task. As suggestive of what this involves, the handling of problems of safety by the NYA is here briefly summarized.

While the NYA was part of the Works Progress Administration accidents which occurred on its projects were taken care of in accordance with WPA policy. After its separation from the WPA, the NYA set up a safety program of its own, centralized in the national office in Washington. A *Preliminary Manual of Safety Procedure* was adopted in December 1939, and a safety expert was appointed in January 1940 to direct the program.

In accordance with the regulations, each administrator is responsible "for the development of an effective safety program" and must "take such measures as are necessary to insure adherence to established safety practices on the part of all persons concerned with National Youth Administration activities." The national safety director travels in the field to assist and direct in the setting up of the program in each state. The regulations, as outlined in the manual of the national office, call for adequate provision for first aid, sanitation, safety supplies, and equipment, in case transportation is needed. If the project is of considerable magnitude or of a hazardous nature, a qualified safety inspector may be assigned to the project. Foremen and supervisors of project work are required to be qualified to administer first aid. Where possible, youth employees are to be given training in first-aid methods. Buildings used by the NYA must not be occupied until they have been inspected and approved as free

---

<sup>11</sup> It may be pointed out in this connection that much depends on social attitudes. The system of "family allowances" developed in many countries provides for special payments to workers in accordance with the size of the family. This might suggest a parallel system of "youth allowances." There are many issues involved, including the possible effects of such a system on the wage structure.

from safety and health hazards. Periodic inspections of buildings during occupancy must be made. Physically handicapped persons must be assigned to work that does not endanger the health or safety of themselves or others.

The NYA requires all local and state offices to file with the national office a report of each accident, a monthly accident report, and special reports on fatalities. Every accident on any NYA project is reported to the national office, whether or not it results in injury to a worker.

It is estimated that about 4,000 accident reports are received each month by the national office from NYA work projects. The job of the safety director is to analyze these reports so as to discover the main causes of the accidents and to instruct foremen and supervisors to take measures for accident prevention. Since the program has been operating a short time with a very small staff, the national office has not yet been able to compile statistics of accidents to show their rate and severity or to indicate what progress has been made in accident prevention.

The question of compensation for disabling injuries has been a serious problem. The NYA is under the federal Workmen's Compensation Act, which was slightly modified to apply to workers in emergency employment. But the provisions of the act are hardly fitted to the youth work programs. Under the law, compensation is given on a percentage basis of the monthly wage or salary. Since the NYA monthly payments are low, compensation for serious injuries is on a very low level.<sup>12</sup> It has been suggested that, since the act cannot easily be changed and since the NYA cannot set up a compensation system of its own, it might be advisable to fix a minimum compensation for serious and fatal accidents.

The NYA regards "safety education" as an important element in its effort to develop in the youth good work habits.

---

<sup>12</sup> For example, in one case, a boy working on NYA woodworking projects had a finger amputated; he received only \$31.72 in compensation. In another case an NYA employee was killed when a tree being placed in a park project fell on him. His family who depended on him for at least partial support will receive only \$3.50 a month for eight years.

The NYA is also under pressure to bring safety conditions on its work projects to the standards which have been developed in private industry and which labor organizations insist upon. The solution of these problems is still in the future.

### PROVISIONS FOR HEALTH AND RECREATION

The employment relationship has tended, for a number of reasons, to become associated in recent times with policies designed to increase the welfare of the workers. In private industry this tendency has given rise to the so-called "welfare capitalism," under which the interest of the employer in the social condition of his employees reaches out into the home and into leisure hours. In public enterprise carried on under different governmental systems, a similar concern for the general living conditions of the worker finds expression in public policies with regard to nutrition, housing, and medical care. Where workers refuse to be under the tutelage either of governments or of their employers, they have arranged to provide welfare services through their trade unions or cooperatives, by organizing clinics, building houses, and so forth.

It is logical that youth work programs should fall in line with this general tendency. Since the youth are selected from underprivileged families and may have more than the average number of health defects, since part-time work leaves much free time, and since the payments made are too low to supply either proper health care or recreation, the desire to aid the youth in meeting these problems is especially strong. And there is added stimulus in the recognition that good health and recreation are essential for obtaining the best results in training and in improving "employability."

#### *Health Programs*

Until recently the NYA had not developed a health program on a national scale, and no coordinated effort had been made to furnish health services to the employed youth. Even the practice of giving medical examinations before assignment to projects

was by no means general. When given, examinations usually were not followed up with clinical treatment.

What was done by the NYA in matters of health was due entirely to the initiative of state administrators and local supervisors. By stimulating local interest or by organizing special projects, some administrators (for instance, those in Ohio, Rhode Island, and Texas) established cooperative relations with local health authorities to provide medical examinations and clinical treatment for their project youth.

The work of the NYA in Texas may be cited as a particularly interesting example in this field. The Texas program includes provisions for a complete physical examination, a hemoglobin test, typhoid inoculations, smallpox vaccination, blood Wassermann (followed by treatment when necessary), hookworm tests and treatments, tuberculin tests, dental work, and eye tests and correction. There is also a program of health education which includes Red Cross instruction in first aid and definitely planned instruction in personal, home, and community hygiene.

Much of this work has been made possible in Texas through the publicizing of facilities now available to youth, such as charity hospitals, county health units, and city health centers and clinics. Corrective treatment has often been made possible by direct contact of the NYA supervisors with health officers, county health units, and private physicians. State institutions for the blind and state tubercular hospitals have been helpful in supplying examinations and aid.

An important part of the Texas program has been the establishment of NYA clinics at four centers in which doctors in the community rotate in giving two hours each week for the treatment of NYA youth. NYA girls are given part-time employment assisting in the operation and maintenance of each of these clinics. Besides routine duties, part of this training includes lectures in health, personal hygiene, first aid, child care, and general sick-room care under the supervision of county health officers and nurses.

The local successes with health programs have caused NYA administrators to turn increasing attention to this field of activity



as one of the most important that the NYA could successfully and profitably develop. Several proposals and recommendations had already been considered, when the program for national defense came upon the horizon. In connection with national defense the NYA has now undertaken a health program for its youth workers on a national scale. On August 1, 1940, the NYA obtained the cooperation of the United States Public Health Service to develop its plans and to put them into operation. The program is to be financed out of the \$32,500,000 supplemental appropriation to NYA, 2.5 per cent of which has been earmarked for expenditure on health programs; this sum of over \$812,000 is to be spread over the remainder of the fiscal year.

The newly inaugurated health program of the NYA includes the following phases.

1. A state-wide health project in every state, headed by a full-time health consultant.

Close collaboration with the Public Health Service, nationally, regionally, and locally, has been arranged by which the Service will furnish vaccines and the like, will aid in setting standards and procedures, and will conduct research into problems connected with the NYA health program.

2. Health examination of all NYA workers.

The form to be filled out is very complete, including Wassermann test, vaginal smear, and tuberculin test, followed by X-ray in cases of positive results. Every examination form is sent to the office of the state health consultant for analysis as to the proper remedial treatment. Unless a youth is unable to do even light work and cannot be expected to recuperate shortly under treatment, he is not rejected for health reasons from employment on NYA. Under the new plan a youth may be temporarily barred from employment on NYA; but, if he undergoes the remedial treatment offered, he may be accepted in a few weeks or months.

3. Correction of defects by means of tonsillectomies, dental care, and the like.

The NYA cannot, however, spend money on hospitalization or corrective appliances, such as glasses, because authorization is lacking in the NYA appropriation statutes.<sup>13</sup>

In resident centers, particularly the larger ones, health and medical services are to be provided directly by the NYA. On most of the local work projects community facilities will be utilized.

4. Health promotion activities: education, recreation, nutrition, and sanitation.

In addition to classwork in health education and the provision of healthful environment, efforts will be made to have the youth's contact with the doctors an educational one. Doctors are encouraged to explain the cause of a given condition, as well as its cure, and to encourage questions on the part of the youth.

This phase also involves cooperation with the home economics agencies of the Department of Agriculture, vocational schools, and colleges to show youth how to practice simple rules of nutrition and general health building.

5. Construction and production of community health facilities which will in turn be available to the NYA youth in many cases.

This includes the expansion of work projects for the building of health facilities, T.B. huts, incubators, the preparation of medical supplies, educational materials, and the like.

### *Recreational Programs*

The recreational work of the NYA has two aspects: (1) the improvement of recreational facilities in local communities, and (2) supervised recreational activities in cooperation with other agencies. Almost 10 per cent of the total number of youth employed on NYA work projects are engaged on "recreational facilities, exclusive of buildings." In addition, many of the

---

<sup>13</sup> In the resident centers which have an infirmary, hospitalization in this infirmary, usually for minor illnesses and injuries, is available to the youth employed on the project. Furthermore, all cases of injury in line of duty which come under the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act are hospitalized when necessary on any project.

buildings put up as NYA projects are either specifically intended for recreational purposes or have potential value as recreational facilities. As previously indicated, the NYA has sponsored projects which resulted in the building of bleachers, tennis courts, grandstands for school athletics, outdoor fireplaces, playgrounds, nature trails, swimming pools, wading pools, community centers, camp and picnic areas, band shells, little theaters, skating rinks, shelterhouses, clubhouses, and gymnasiums, as well as in the production of playground equipment. In many communities the facilities provided under the NYA program were the only ones available; in other cases, additions to existing facilities were made.<sup>14</sup>

According to the NYA, the establishment of youth community centers is a particularly valuable part of the program which could and should be expanded. Community centers, as built by the NYA, are often large buildings with assembly rooms, classrooms, recreation rooms (equipped with ping-pong tables, games, bowling alleys), dance floors that can be converted into banquet halls, libraries, art rooms, first-aid rooms, vocational guidance rooms, and kitchens. A number of community centers have installed rooms for the NYA shops and sewing rooms. A few centers have little theaters and space for radio stations.<sup>15</sup>

Youth centers are coordinated with the recreational activities of the community. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs, and other local groups hold meetings in the centers and work with NYA

---

<sup>14</sup> For a list of recreational facilities built or improved by the NYA in 1939-40, see Table 9, p. 68. In some localities, abandoned excavations, pits, ravines, or dumps that have been unsightly and hazardous spots in the community have been improved for recreational use. See *NYA Recreational Facilities Projects* (Washington: National Youth Administration, August 1939), mimeo; also Betty and Ernest K. Lindley, *A New Deal for Youth* (New York: Viking Press, 1938), pp. 27, 35, 51.

<sup>15</sup> A type of educational recreation which might be developed is the use of trips to show the NYA youth the points of interest in their own communities and in other parts of the country, as well as industrial plants, model farms, and the like. These could be so organized as to yield large results at low cost. NYA officials also point to the desirability of developing library facilities, including vocational literature on the various work projects in the community. In many localities, especially in rural areas, NYA libraries, meager as they are, supply the only reading material for youth.

local supervisors in planning recreational activities for young people.

The need for expanding the recreational programs for youth in general and by the NYA in particular has been widely endorsed. The American Youth Commission, in its recommendations on *Next Steps in National Policy for Youth*, has stated the case as follows:

The American Youth Commission believes that community recreation programs are an essential social service and one needed even more at present than in times of less stress and strain. The existing community programs should be vigorously maintained and where possible expanded.

In only a few cases, however, are the needs of youth adequately met by existing community programs, which appeal mainly to children under 16 years and to adults who have become established in the community. The special needs of youth are important enough to warrant vigorous action. What can be done?

First, the existing community recreation agencies should review their activities for youth and greatly improve and intensify them.

Second, the schools should lend their assistance and, especially in cases where there is no other community recreation agency, should exert active leadership in providing a community program.

Third, the National Youth Administration, as an agency concerned broadly for youth welfare as well as an institution specifically designed to provide work experience for unemployed youth, should assign youth project workers in increasing numbers to the recreational agencies as staff assistants, should increase the number of projects for the construction of recreational facilities, and should concern itself generally with the recreational situation not only for youth on the work projects but for all youth.

The inertia of public authorities in dealing with the problem of youth recreation results mainly from the common habit of thought which regards a public recreation program as something extra, a luxury to be provided if convenient and to be dispensed with when not. Nothing could be further from the truth. Soundly conceived and properly administered, the recreation program provides not only an indispensable service in itself but also the key to character training and to the general development of morale and patriotic citizenship.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> *Next Steps in National Policy for Youth* (Washington: American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, 1941), pp. 11-12.

---

## 6

# RELATIONS WITH EMPLOYERS AND ORGANIZED LABOR

---

WORK PROGRAMS for youth, even of limited scope, touch upon the interests of employers and workers at many points. The number of youth employed, the types of projects set up, the wage policies followed, and the training provided must in time affect in greater or less degree the supply of labor and its composition, wages and standards of work, the relative importance of private and public enterprise in certain industries, the conditions of union organization, and so on. This has been clearly illustrated in preceding chapters in so far as the out-of-school work program of the NYA is concerned.

Employer groups and workers' organizations have been fully aware of the potential economic effects of youth work programs. It is not surprising, therefore, that they have shown a keen interest in the policies and methods followed, particularly in those of the NYA, and have tried to influence their course. The National Association of Manufacturers and various local employer groups, on the one hand, and the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations, on the other, have considered repeatedly during the past few years the general aspects of the problem and its specific manifestations in the NYA; they have embodied their views on the subject in resolutions passed at their annual conventions and in bills introduced in Congress. The NYA has been cognizant of the interests of these groups and has realized that they must be taken into account in its work.

Present relations of the NYA with employer groups and organized labor are, however, far from satisfactory. While there are many examples of cooperation among them, especially in



local communities, there is also some friction on larger questions among the national organizations. How may such friction be reduced to a minimum and on what basis may cooperation be affected? A youth program which would ignore the attitudes and opinions of the groups in industry would run the danger not only of arousing antagonism but also of becoming isolated from the industrial and labor movements which affect economic conditions and policies. A brief survey of the present situation is thus presented here with a view to throwing some light on the question.

### THE POLICIES OF THE NYA

The NYA has attempted to fit its program for unemployed youth into the general schemes for dealing with youth advocated by both capital and labor, without giving up its own basic ideas. It has been difficult, however, to maintain a balance between the demands of the two groups and the lines of policy which the NYA wished to follow. In order to keep in contact with their views, the NYA has provided for the representation of both labor and employer groups in the Administration. There are six representatives of organized labor (both the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L.) and four representatives of employer groups on the National Advisory Committee. While the Committee meets only occasionally, it is presumed to offer the employer and labor representatives an opportunity for expressing their views on the labor and general policies of the NYA.

The national office of the NYA has not issued any regulations to the states on the question of their relations with organized labor or with employers, except the general instruction for representation of both groups on state advisory committees. Local administrators generally recognize the desirability of including both groups on their local advisory councils to insure their cooperation in work projects. It is claimed that there have been few, if any, cases of an antiunion attitude on the part of state administrators, but it is admitted that some state administrators have been more eager than others to establish good relations with organized labor. In some states, representation of labor

on the state advisory committee means little more than routine attendance at an annual conference. In other states, NYA administrators have called meetings of labor organizations in the state and have been successful in securing the active support of labor groups. Locally, the NYA is often in closer contact with employers.

In numerous local communities, as well as at the state level, the NYA can cite many specific examples illustrating its co-operative relations with labor. In Atlanta, Georgia, for instance, only NYA workers from a project in operation are accepted as learners in the garment makers' union. In what is regarded by the NYA as one of its largest and best organized work centers, in Astoria, Long Island, some 2,500 boys and girls are employed, on a triple shift basis, on several projects. One of these, a garment-making project, in which some 50 girls are employed, has been set up with the cooperation of the union in the industry. The supervisors appointed by the NYA are union men. Conditions of employment are approved in consultation with the union. It is assumed that these girls are being trained for the garment trades in New York and that they would have preference of employment in the New York district upon completing a three- to six-month training period. Similar projects in the garment trades, set up in consultation and cooperation with the unions, are found on the Pacific coast and elsewhere.

These are illustrations of some of the attempts made and the results obtained in this respect. There is no information which would permit a more general summary.

#### ATTITUDES OF EMPLOYERS

What many employers and employer groups feel about some of the NYA projects, especially where "production for use" infringes on the market for specific commodities, has already been indicated in Chapter 4. Employers' complaints against the NYA are heard in some of the skilled trades, especially the construction and metal trades. It is the employers' claim that the NYA is "taking their work away" by putting up schools and other buildings which would otherwise be erected in a reg-

ular way by building contractors. The NYA is also said to be turning out large numbers of boys who set themselves up in business in these trades with few resources and still less knowledge and who therefore depress prices and business standards.

In general, employer groups, such as the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce,<sup>1</sup> have considered the NYA as a part of the WPA, and their attitude toward it is due to their general views on government relief activities. Both groups have opposed large public expenditures for work-relief purposes, and have advocated the organization of relief on a state and local basis, with or without federal aid. Both organizations go on the assumption that eventually private industry will be able to take care of the millions of unemployed youth of the country through the opening of new industries and the expansion of old ones. They thus look upon the WPA and the NYA as purely temporary bodies and see no need for their continuance when conditions return to normal. Spokesmen for the National Association of Manufacturers stated, however, that many businessmen would rather cut other government expenses before they touch the NYA or CCC. Spokesmen for the Chamber of Commerce were also hesitant about saying that the Chamber would approve of reducing the activity of the NYA at the present time. Evidently these spokesmen feel that private industry would have difficulty in absorbing any considerable portion of the unemployed youth now. The spokesmen of both employer groups approved the student-aid part of the NYA program.

The spokesmen for the National Association of Manufacturers expressed approval of the prevocational training that some NYA projects provide. They felt that this activity increases the value of the youth to private industry. The Chamber of Commerce stresses the belief that work training should be conducted in industry under approved systems of apprenticeship.

---

<sup>1</sup> The United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers have not made any official statements of policy with regard to the NYA specifically. The attitudes attributed to them here were expressed in personal interviews by some of their officials.

For supplementary work in the schools, the needs of youth could presumably be taken care of by the Vocational Education Division of the United States Office of Education in cooperation with private industry. Both business groups feel that wages on NYA projects should be below those paid in private employment, so that workers will have an incentive to seek a place on the pay-rolls of private industry.

In brief, organized employer groups admit that there are some good points in the NYA program. But they accept the NYA only on an emergency basis to be tolerated until it can be done away with.

### THE VIEWS OF THE C.I.O

The general policy of the C.I.O. with regard to the NYA has been one of approval and encouragement. The C.I.O. in its general resolutions on youth expresses its belief that all young people out of work and out of school must be provided with opportunities for employment or for assistance to continue in school if the country is not to suffer serious consequences in the oncoming years. In the report of John L. Lewis to the national convention in October 1939, the NYA is praised for blazing a path for the handling of youth problems in the following ways: (1) by making jobs available for youth who want to work, (2) by giving educational opportunities to young people who should have them and could not otherwise obtain them, and (3) by serving as a means of preventing young unemployed people from flooding the labor market and putting too heavy pressure on the present supply of labor. Mr. Lewis in his report indicated that these three contributions of the NYA can also be considered an outline for the future purposes of the organization. He stressed the "economic waste" involved in letting young people who want to work or who want to go to school stay idle. Since private industry is not able to meet the needs of these youth, at least not for some time, the C.I.O. feels that some government agency, such as the NYA, should take over the task.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> "Report of President John L. Lewis," *Daily Proceedings of the Second Constitutional Convention of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, San Francisco, October 10-13, 1939* (Washington: Congress of Industrial Organizations, 1939), pp. 23-24.

The main criticism of the NYA by the C.I.O. has been that the program has not been sufficiently extensive. Mr. Lewis asserts in his report that of our allegedly 4,000,000 unemployed young people, the NYA out-of-school work program takes care of only about 207,000 (figure for July 1939) and that the student work program provides "meager financial assistance" to about 250,000 high school and college students. His report and interviews with other C.I.O. officials indicate their belief that the NYA does not employ enough young people, that the wages paid are too low, and that training is inadequate. The proposal is made that the NYA enlarge its scope and its functions. The report does not indicate how far the program should be expanded, but some C.I.O. officials have suggested that a billion dollars a year might not be too much to spend on the problems of youth in general.

With regard to specific points, C.I.O. officials have expressed the suggestion that wage rates in the NYA be raised, though no opinion is given as to definite increases. They do not think that wage payments should be based on the minimum set for private industry by the Fair Labor Standards Act, because then WPA wage rates would also have to be placed on the same basis and such a procedure might discourage labor from trying to get back in private employment. C.I.O. officials have indicated in interviews that they are for the elimination of regional differentials in the NYA wage scale. Their apparent conclusion is that the NYA should establish a "sound wage policy" with higher hourly and monthly rates and should employ as many individuals as possible under such a policy.

While C.I.O. officials do not find that the training program of the NYA is in conflict with organized labor, the C.I.O. does not think it is the function of the NYA to train skilled workers. It approves the NYA policy of increasing the "general employability" of young workers.

Another suggestion of the C.I.O. is that an educational program be conducted by the NYA. Under present educational conditions, the C.I.O. feels that the related training courses should be included within the program of the work projects of the NYA



and that the youth should be paid for hours spent in such courses.

In brief, until very recently, the C.I.O.'s suggestions and proposals for the NYA could be summed up in the word "expansion" and NYA officials found it easy to be in agreement with the C.I.O.<sup>3</sup>

### THE POSITION OF THE A.F. OF L.

It is with the unions in the A.F. of L. that the NYA has had most friction. While some of the local and national unions in the A.F. of L. have lent their aid and wholehearted cooperation to the NYA, many unions regard its work and policies with an unfriendly eye. This is particularly true of those in the building trades, which claim that the NYA turns out "a lot of half-baked mechanics" who are ready to hire themselves out as carpenters, plasterers, and other types of trained workers at less than union rates. In many communities where the young boys, after working on NYA projects, succeed in obtaining regular jobs in private industry, the unions have had to admit them to membership. But the result, it is claimed, is to break down standards of work and wages. The NYA, according to these unions, cannot give proper training in construction or other skilled work on their projects and when they attempt to do so, they merely flood the labor market with "botchers" who take work away from the skilled mechanics. Furthermore, on its own building projects, the NYA carries on at low wages work which could be and otherwise would be done by union men, thus aggravating unemployment among skilled workers in the construction industry.

---

<sup>3</sup> In recent months, there has been a new note in the C.I.O. declarations on the NYA. While supporting the expansion of NYA activities, the C.I.O. has expressed apprehension as to their direction and effects. "The assignment of an increasingly greater proportion of NYA projects to direct production work of a military nature raises serious problems for labor. Many of the NYA shops will be set up to produce goods which might otherwise be manufactured by private industry under union conditions. The NYA products will be manufactured at wage rates far below the prevailing rate."—*Daily Proceedings of the Third Constitutional Convention of the Congress of Industrial Organizations . . . 1940* (Washington: The Congress, 1941), p. 57. At the 1940 convention, the C.I.O. also more definitely stressed the need of apprenticeship training and of retraining workers under the auspices of the U. S. Office of Education, the U. S. Department of Labor, and the WPA.

An example of this sort of conflict occurred in the District of Columbia when the NYA tried to start a project in Greenbelt, Maryland (which is government property), on which NYA workers were to build a "youth center" under the supervision of a union man. The local building trades council immediately challenged the right of the NYA to go into a field where there were unemployed skilled workers. The result of the conflict was that the union foreman was forced to withdraw from the job and work went on under a nonunion man. Incidents of this kind have sometimes caused strained feelings between some building trades unions and the NYA.

According to some NYA officials, the NYA does not attempt to do any kind of construction work in some states because of union opposition. But where building projects are carried on, especially in the southern states, complaints are brought by the carpenters', painters', bricklayers', and stonecutters' unions, which harass the NYA.

To cite another example, some electrical workers' unions claim that they have had to be vigilant to see that the NYA did not lower their standards, or that it did not endanger the employment of unemployed skilled workers. At one time it was proposed that NYA workers be allowed to rewire houses in certain types of housing units. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers protested successfully against what they felt to be an invasion of the NYA with its "inexperienced workers" into a field where the union provided skilled workers with years of training and experience. Their protest was based not only on the claim that the proposed project for NYA workers would cause economic sacrifices to the electrical workers, but that it would also run into difficulties because of the requirements set up by municipal ordinances. Protests have been lodged against the NYA also by the bookbinders' locals to the effect that NYA bookbinding projects are displacing labor in this field. The Nurses' Association has protested the employment of youth as nurses' aides and attendants in hospitals.

As a national organization, the A.F. of L. has taken a more

or less critical position with regard to the NYA, approving some of its features and rejecting others. In its report to the 1939 convention, the executive council summarized its general attitude toward the NYA in the following statement:

We find a tendency of the National Youth Administration to deal with the problems of youth as though they were in conflict with the interests of the rest of the community. We believe that the distress of youth in this depression, while it has a special appeal, is only one portion of the dire distress which befell young and old alike. The remedy for all is the same—to get our economic agencies in action to provide the materials and services for the kind of life we wish to have. As a relief measure we do not believe that there should be division based on immaturity. However, we do believe that regardless of the fortunes of the family income, boys and girls should have opportunity to continue their education through secondary schools and through academic work if able and willing to do the work. We, therefore, heartily recommend the program of the National Youth Administration that enables youth to remain in school, and urge its continuance in connection with the Office of Education. That portion of its work which provides services to persons without work experience we believe should be developed in connection with the U. S. Employment Service and a Juvenile Employment Division. . . .

That portion of the National Youth Administration's activities concerned with vocational training we hold should be done by existing agencies, expanded as needed, and should be subject to those regulations and safeguards which society has deemed wise. It is socially and economically dangerous to provide potential resources to enable undertakings to be independent of existing agencies charged with performing that function under the safeguards provided by law.<sup>4</sup>

The attitude of the A.F. of L. toward the NYA is dictated in part by traditional policies and also, to some extent, by lack of fully cooperative relations. The A.F. of L. has been among the most influential organizations in the United States which have advanced the cause of public education and of vocational training. In its desire to maintain craft standards and to regulate the supply of new entrants into industry through apprenticeship rules, it has helped to establish the Vocational Education Division of the Office of Education and the Federal Committee on

---

<sup>4</sup> *Report of the Proceedings of the Fifty-ninth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, . . . Cincinnati, Ohio, October 2-13, Inclusive, 1939* (Washington: American Federation of Labor, 1940), pp. 212-13.

Apprenticeship Training in the Department of Labor. It has been wary of private vocational schools and has kept a watchful eye on many public vocational institutions which may be, and have been, used to disguise exploitative practices with regard to young workers. It sees also a potential danger in a large vocational program sponsored by an emergency organization without regard to the immediate absorptive powers of the labor market. While they admit that in general the NYA is probably not competitive with private industry, A.F. of L. officials state that in some specific cases it has been; they point to alleged instances in which the NYA has set up vocational schools in which young people were taught in six or eight months types of work for which regular apprenticeship periods of two and three years had been fixed.

But difficulties have also been due to the feeling of some A.F. of L. representatives that the NYA is skeptical of the Federation's policies and methods. It is the Federation's contention that the NYA does not provide for adequate and real consultation with labor on problems of policy or procedure. Membership on the National Advisory Committee of the NYA, in this view, means little more than attending occasional meetings at which remote questions are dealt with in perfunctory fashion. Participation on state and local NYA committees does not signify much more.

At its annual convention in 1938, the A.F. of L. suggested that the NYA and the CCC be merged into a "National Youth Service Administration" in the Office of Education. This plan presumably would not only make the more valuable services of both organizations permanent but would also integrate the work of these emergency organizations with the work of the government agencies normally concerned with the duties involved. In 1939, however, President William Green lent his aid to the NYA in its request for larger federal appropriations and was willing to grant that the NYA, in addition to its school-aid work, should also develop a "prevocational" program. The report approved by the delegates to the 1939 convention read in part:

Out of labor's experience there have come some clear-cut conclusions. In the first place, while unemployment among youth is an increasingly serious problem, it is impossible to resolve this problem apart from the total problem. Youth are a part of the body politic; they are an indivisible part of every nation. When unemployment abounds, youth are among many other sufferers; when jobs are plentiful, youth will find work.

In the second place, labor realizes the wisdom of extending secondary educational opportunities to our youth to meet the need of unemployed youth in many of our communities. While raising the school age level is not a permanent solution for the question of youth unemployment, it does place upon the educational authorities a responsibility which they are better equipped to meet than any other agency in the community.

The decision of the National Youth Administration to develop a Juvenile Employment Division in the Labor Employment Offices, to assist in the placement of young people in their labor market, should materially help in finding work for youth.

Your committee notes the concern of the Permanent Committee on Education for the activity of the National Youth Administration in connection with vocational training. The difficulty that has arisen in the National Youth Administration is due to the confusion in the minds of this agency as to whether their function is to perform vocational training or work experience of a pre-vocational character. It is the considered judgment of your committee that vocational training of our youth should be done through existing educational agencies adapted to meet this need. On the other hand, in the matter of work experience of a distinctly pre-vocational character, your committee agrees with the present policy of the National Youth Administration.

But what has become clear is the need for a revision of our high school curriculum to meet the changing needs of industry as well as the expanding needs of youth. As the secondary school becomes a common school for all of our youth, it is clear that we must have more in the way of pre-professional training and pre-vocational education for youth.<sup>5</sup>

At its 1940 convention, the A.F. of L. restated its general position with regard to the NYA, but emphasized more strongly than in previous years that the out-of-school work program should be limited. The A.F. of L. expressed concern about "the overlapping of NYA projects with the apprentice training program" and about the NYA's "invasion of the defense field."

---

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 619-20.



The convention demanded that the A.F. of L. be represented directly in an advisory capacity on the NYA.<sup>6</sup>

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR A LABOR RELATIONS POLICY

If it continues its work, the NYA will have to meet the criticisms advanced by organized labor, by employers, and by the community in general. In this respect, it is in the same position as other public agencies. It must work for the interests of the group for whose benefit it exists and must try to fit these group interests into the scheme of other group purposes and of the public welfare as a whole.

It is essential for the success of a youth work program that it establish cooperative relations with the labor groups, which are alert and persistent where their interests seem to them to be in jeopardy. Besides, a youth work program agency exercises employment and vocational functions which constrain it to take a position on many issues that are part and parcel of the organized labor movement.

Without entering into specific issues of labor relations as they confront the NYA, it may be useful to consider briefly the considerations which underlie the problem in general. The main principle that seems to call for recognition is that a youth work program can be fully successful only if it enlists the active cooperation of organized labor and capital. Particularly with regard to labor, the relationship to be fostered must be that of give-and-take. In so far as the development of the program infringes on established employment relations or necessitates changes in prevailing rules and procedures, those responsible

---

<sup>6</sup> *Report of the Proceedings of the Sixtieth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor . . . 1940* (Washington: The Federation, 1941), pp. 585-87. It may be interesting to quote from the statement of John P. Frey, president, Metal Trades Department, as follows: "My purpose . . . is not to criticize the NYA, but rather to praise it, because of the heartfelt interest it has had in the welfare of youth and in the wise expenditure of the enormous appropriations it has received. My purpose, however, is to insist that . . . this American Federation of Labor should be adequately represented . . ." in determining national policies for vocational education and apprentice training and on local advisory committees. (*Ibid.*, p. 587.)

for the program may be called upon to do educational and pioneering work among organized labor and employer groups in order to bring them around to new ways of thinking and to new methods of action. On the other hand, administrators of youth work programs must keep in mind that existing labor organizations, no matter what their general political and social outlook, have had long years of experience with the problems involved and that their views and policies are based not merely on selfish craft or group interests but also on wider studies of the general interest. The labor movement of today, no matter what its limitations may be from various points of view, is the result of much experimentation and of many readjustments in ideas and policies.

It is futile to close one's eyes to the fact that there has been a profound change in the last decade in the relations between the labor organizations and the government.<sup>7</sup> Organized labor has always claimed the right to shape government structure and policy, whether by political or nonpolitical means. But it is only within recent years that the government, especially in this country, has assumed the function of trying, directly or indirectly, to shape the structure and policies of trade unionism. It is natural that most, if not all, agencies of the government should attempt to fall in with this general policy. But it is not always desirable that every public agency carry this policy to its bitter end.

When a youth work program treads on the heels of organized labor, it might be well for it to step lightly. Whether they realize it or not, the administrators of a youth work program may exercise a considerable influence on the future of labor organizations. The hundreds of thousands of young boys and girls who pass through the work projects are at an impressionable age and in a sensitive state of mind. They absorb attitudes and views even more easily than ideas and knowledge. The relations with organized labor on the work projects may affect the future range and degree of "organizability" of large num-

---

<sup>7</sup> See Lewis L. Lorwin, "The Challenge to Organized Labor," *Current History Magazine*, XXXVIII (September 1933), 126-37.

bers of workers in industry. Existing labor organizations are aware of this, and it is one of the reasons for their apprehensiveness in regard to youth programs in general.

Cooperative relations with labor must thus be developed in a spirit of genuine mutuality. The advice and help of labor officials might be solicited locally when a work project first begins, so as to insure the necessary regard for labor standards within the localities. Experience shows that labor groups, as well as sponsors in general, are likely to cooperate in most cases if they are approached in the right way and are given a voice in the plans as they are made. In working out individual projects, labor unions should be consulted about the type of work needed in the community, the number of workers already out of work in the particular industry, the apprentices or learners already being trained, and the relation of the project to local employment opportunities. The relations might be further cemented by hiring supervisors who are union men or are friendly to labor and by bringing up standards of work on the projects. Better results in this respect might, perhaps, be assured if the local and state administrators acted more in accord with unified directions from the national office. There is reason to expect that a more clearly thought-out plan, providing for direct contacts with both labor organizations and employer groups at the local, state, and national levels, might help to solve many of the difficulties which have appeared in the past.

---

# 7

## EFFECTS OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

---

THE CONCENTRATION of interest on national defense in recent months has shifted the center of gravity of the problems of the NYA and of youth work programs in general. Some of the questions raised in preceding chapters, for example, the relative merits of a universal or selective program, are being answered as much on the basis of military considerations as of youth training and employment. Other questions are still open to debate, but the arguments for or against any particular answer to them are overshadowed by the supreme issue of national preparedness.

But while the problems of national defense are affecting the youth work programs, it is also true, and significant, that these programs are molding our thinking and action on national defense. The very existence of these programs, reflecting as they do our increased concern for and interest in youth, has been a factor in giving us a larger view of what national defense is and of what must be done to secure it. It is seen that, in some measure, the youth work programs have been an advance, though unheralded, preparation for some of the tasks involved. The CCC has helped to conserve natural resources and thus strengthen the physical basis of defense.<sup>1</sup> The NYA has given training and developed skills where none existed before, thus

---

<sup>1</sup> It is not fully realized that the CCC has played a dominant part recently in the conservation and development of our natural resources. A total of approximately 270,000 young men between 17 and 23, inclusive, have been devoting 40 hours a week to this work. (See Table 1, p. 26.) A good deal of the work done by WPA workers in the youth group and by NYA junior workers has been concerned also with the same field. True, all these efforts combined are not conserving resources as rapidly as they are being depleted, but this merely points to the need of expansion.

serving the industrial needs of a defense program. And, above all, the entire youth program with its emphasis on national responsibility for economic opportunity and security has fostered the sense of social solidarity without which national defense can have no moral basis.

In other words, the youth work programs have pointed, and continue to point, to a conception of national defense which is economic and social as well as physical and military. In this conception, the youth still carry the greatest risk and are called upon for supreme sacrifices. But the nation is expected to carry to the limit its own obligations in relation to youth and to the purposes for which youth may be willing to give their lives. The protection of the nation from physical, economic, and political danger or collapse is strongest when and if the entire nation is astir with the will to live as the youth would live in a world of their own, made in the image of the national ideal. National defense, in this sense, is or should be merely part of the general process of realizing more fully the national purpose.

This general attitude was expressed in more specific terms by the American Youth Commission in a statement made recently on the national responsibility toward youth, from which the following may be quoted:

The fundamental basis for any system of compulsory military service must be found in the doctrine of the reciprocal obligations of the citizen and the state. Among other responsibilities, the citizen has the obligation to serve in the common defense in time of need. This is an elementary duty of citizenship, older than civilization, and not absent from any form of organized government, democratic or otherwise. It is a universal responsibility, although one which may be discharged in more than one way.

The obligations of the state to the citizen have passed through a long process of evolution. That process is still continuing, and should continue. The responsibilities of the state must be determined in the light of what is possible at any given time and place. In view of our natural and human resources and our democratic ideals, the obligations of the state to the citizen in this country are proportionately heavy.

Selective compulsory military service is a very serious undertaking. It amounts to setting apart a certain group of our young men who will be trained to kill and to take the risk of being killed in order that the demo-



cratic community of free people may continue to exist. When the obligation of the citizen to the state is thus carried to the utmost extreme of duty that can be asked of him, it is imperative for all of us to re-examine the extent to which the state is carrying out its obligations toward the citizen.

The concern of the American Youth Commission is for youth, for it is youth who will bear most of the burden of selective compulsory military service, even though all feasible steps are taken to spread the burden. In all conscience, therefore, it would seem to the Commission that no act providing for military conscription should be passed without acceptance by the nation at the same time of full responsibility for the provision of adequate economic, educational, health, and recreational conditions for youth. The nation has the obligation to provide these conditions in order to make possible the development of real freedom for each and all of the youth of the nation. If it is the duty of all, not some, to serve in the common defense of the nation, it is equally the duty of the nation to provide good conditions of life for all, not some, of the youth.<sup>2</sup>

It is impossible to foresee all the consequences which the larger idea of national defense is likely to have on social-economic policy and on youth programs in particular. But it may be helpful to review briefly what has been attempted so far to readjust youth programs to the needs of national defense and to indicate some of the problems which arise.

#### ADJUSTING YOUTH PROGRAMS TO THE NEEDS OF DEFENSE

The first response on the part of the youth training agencies to the announcement of a national defense program was the expression of confidence in their ability to meet the needs which the program implied. In a statement made public a few days after national defense bills were introduced in Congress, the NYA declared that it was "preparing to expand its work training program in the fields of shop and construction workers, to provide 450,000 or more young men and women with basic mechanical training."<sup>3</sup> While, according to its figures,<sup>4</sup> it was already training over 90,000 boys and girls as construction and shop workers, the NYA was ready to enlarge its program which, it

---

<sup>2</sup> *Youth, Defense, and the National Welfare* (Washington: American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, July, 1940), pp. 4-5.

<sup>3</sup> NYA Press Release 93, June 4, 1940, Washington, D. C., p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix Table XXVI, p. 182.

said, was both necessary and possible. According to its statement, the national defense program brought a tremendous demand from young people for elementary training, and industrialists, businessmen, and other employers have come forward with offers of "surplus or semiobsolete machinery, valuable for training purposes but no longer used in their plants." On the other hand, the NYA found, as a result of mechanical ability tests conducted during the past winter, that there is among the needy youth who have not the resources to attend trade mechanical schools "a great untapped reservoir which should be directed into mechanical pursuits of great value to the nation." The NYA had collected a great deal of "preliminary data" on the costs and possibilities of wider training in mechanical pursuits which would enable it to proceed quickly with the organization of the necessary projects.

Similar statements were made by other agencies dealing with vocational education and training. The United States Commissioner of Education estimated in July 1940 that if the program then under way were continued through June 30, 1941 by further appropriations, 600,000 persons in addition to those who normally would receive vocational training could be trained for national defense industries at a cost of \$48,600,000.<sup>5</sup> The Office of Education reported early in February 1941 that between July 1 and December 31, 1940, a total of 328,000 persons had been enrolled in defense training courses. Of these, 185,000 had received pre-employment refresher training and 143,000 had been enrolled in supplementary courses to give new skills to men already employed. On the basis of reports from the states, the Office estimated that, of the 125,000 persons who have completed pre-employment refresher training, 75,000 have been placed in industry.<sup>6</sup>

Shortly after the appointment of the National Defense Advisory Commission, official machinery was set up for the elaboration of specific plans and procedures. On June 18, 1940 Presi-

---

<sup>5</sup> See *Proposals to Expand the Program of Training for National Defense through Schools and Colleges* (Washington: U. S. Office of Education, July 27, 1940). Mimeo.

<sup>6</sup> Information from the U. S. Office of Education.

dent Roosevelt authorized Sidney Hillman to make a study of a proposal for the training of about 2,000,000 young men and women to implement national defense preparations. The task involved the drawing up of a concrete plan by which the activities of various governmental agencies dealing with youth could be coordinated for the purpose. On June 23, 1940 a plan was announced by Mr. Hillman, which has since been put into effect.<sup>7</sup> The program called for the training of youth in the WPA, the NYA, and the CCC, of the unemployed in general, and also of workers in industry. Under the in-service training scheme, workers already employed were to be moved upward through job-training and related vocational courses. Since few plants now maintain organized training programs and the number of employees trained is relatively small, staffs of trade and technical schools, both public and private, were to be utilized to the full during the summer for eight- or ten-week periods to prepare the needed labor supply. In some cases technical and vocational teachers were to be transplanted to industrial establishments to train already employed workers in new skills or to orientate new workers as soon as possible.

The program provided for "voluntary training courses" for the NYA, so as to enlarge the number of youth receiving training in "basic skills" to the maximum that the NYA could absorb. In the CCC the central repair shops were to be used for training purposes. They were to be expanded to include instruction and practical training in major repairs, general overhauling, and rebuilding of trucks, tractors, and so forth in order to provide an understanding of the proper use of shop tools and equipment. It was estimated that facilities could be provided for the training of 1,500,000 workers.<sup>8</sup>

In accordance with the general purposes of the defense program, the NYA began increasing the proportion of youth em-

---

<sup>7</sup> National Defense Advisory Commission Press Release, PR 17, June 24, 1940, Washington, D. C.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4. The CCC modified its regulations so that unemployed young men from families not on relief or in actual need will be permitted to enroll. About 100,000 young men and war veterans may be added to the rolls.

ployed on construction and mechanical work projects. The number of young workers on clerical projects decreased from 102,000 in May 1940 to 69,000 in August 1940, while the number of those in metal, mechanical, radio, automotive, and other shops rose during the same period from 54,000 to 71,000.<sup>9</sup>

In September 1940, the NYA obtained a supplemental appropriation of \$32,500,000 to be used in large part for the acquisition of better equipment and for the organization of a larger number of construction shops.<sup>10</sup> It was said that with these added means the NYA would be able to increase the number of youth on mechanical and similar projects from 71,000 to about 125,000. Plans have also been under way for using some of the NYA shops to produce articles that might be useful to the Army (for example, cots) and at the same time provide the desired experience for the employed youth.

In order to gear its out-of-school program more closely to the needs of national defense, steps have been taken to increase cooperation between the NYA and the state public employment services by exchanging reports on youth that can be placed in private industry and by other means.<sup>11</sup>

### PROBLEMS AHEAD

The national and international events which will affect youth work programs in the near future cannot be forecast in detail, but their main trend can be discerned in general outline. There can be little doubt that in the years immediately ahead the United States will play an increasingly active part in world affairs and accordingly will continue to develop an extensive pro-

---

<sup>9</sup> For data in this and the following paragraph see House Committee on Appropriations, 76th Cong., 3d sess., *Supplemental Hearing: First Supplemental Civil Functions Appropriation Bill for 1941* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), pp. 2-3, 25-26.

<sup>10</sup> The sum of \$7,500,000 was also appropriated to the Office of Education for training youth for defense purposes through the vocational schools.

<sup>11</sup> See Bureau of Employment Security, Letter No. 4471 to all state employment agencies, October 21, 1940, "Cooperation with National Youth Administration" (Washington: Social Security Board, 1940). Mimeo.

gram of national defense which will sustain industrial activity at a high level.

Nevertheless, it is still a question whether, in view of technological and other factors, such activity will absorb the unemployed and especially whether it will provide work for all the potential youthful entrants into industry. Even the establishment of a fair-sized army, assuming no actual warfare, may not have such results. But what these developments do foreshadow are shifts in the age composition of the working population, the tapping of new sources of labor also within the age groups of youth, and large movements of workers (including the younger ones) between regions, industries, and occupations.

No less important is the psychological aspect of this trend in American development. It means that the idea and implications of national defense are to enter more definitely into the consciousness of the people and will have a greater part in the education of the younger generation. Though it is generally hoped that the United States will avoid the need for a conscripted army in peacetime as a permanent policy, the emergency measure of the selective draft has the support of the people. It seems inevitable that in one form or another the capacity to meet emergency by all the modern methods of defense will be developed to the fullest possible extent.

The planning of youth work programs, under these developing conditions, thus presents three aspects. There is, first, the need for meeting the immediate demands of national defense. There is, second, the necessity of preparing for the industrial and economic dislocations and transformations due to the defense program. And there is, third, the call for psychological and social adjustments involved in the responsibility of preparing the youth physically and mentally for defense action, in case of necessity, in accord with the social concepts of national purpose discussed above.

With regard to the first two aspects of the situation, the most important problem is that of giving such training to the youth as will meet not only immediate but long-run trends. The tendency at present, in accordance with the exigencies of the situa-



tion, is to focus attention on expanding the youth work training program so as to gear it largely to the requirements of national defense for special types of skills. The branches of industry that are being expanded, such as aircraft, shipbuilding, and machine tools, involve largely the metal trades and training in mechanics. As the defense program gets further under way and generates greater speed of action, the demand on the youth agencies to intensify this part of their activities is likely to become more insistent.

The question is whether this tendency may not be overemphasized and more youth be trained for specialized jobs than can later be absorbed in the labor market. Such a development would not only carry danger to established labor standards in industry but would threaten to depress the morale of youth seeking employment.

It is also necessary to be on guard against the possibility that emphasis on the industrial needs of national defense might obscure the necessity of continued consideration for the problems outlined in this report. The questions of internal organization, of the relation of training to general occupational needs, of wage payments, of accident prevention, of proper relations with employer and labor groups have significance also under conditions of preparation for national defense. In fact, they should acquire even greater importance as the youth training program involves larger numbers and is carried on with greater speed and intensity. The situation also adds urgency to those aspects of the youth work program which have so far received little or no attention, for example, the need for developing youth health services and a program of social recreation.

Another problem which is no less if not more important is that of an adequate national defense educational program. One of the gaps in the youth work programs so far has been their limited provision for the continued general education of the working youth. In practice, this has meant that the aid given to youth has tended to emphasize the inequalities of social status due to differences of educational opportunity. Whether inevitable or not, this fact has accentuated the "relief

stigma" which has attached in some measure and in some places to the out-of-school youth work program.

The purposes of national defense make it desirable to fill this gap now and to offer the youth in training a program of general education in the aims of the national defense program and in the national and international conditions by which it is shaped.<sup>12</sup> This would be a considerable undertaking, but the means for it could be made available. The need for such an effort along educational lines is the one clear idea that has emerged out of the confusion of our times. It is in consonance with the purposes of democracy, and its acceptance would enhance the value of youth programs as part of a permanent educational policy as well as for national defense.

---

<sup>12</sup> Such a program is now being initiated in New York state under the auspices of the Regents and financed in part from federal appropriations for the related training of youth on NYA work projects. This new program is experimental, and its progress should be of great interest.

---

## 8

# COSTS AND ADMINISTRATION

---

IN CONSIDERING the possibilities of public youth work programs, two further problems arise which are of basic importance. The first is how much the total expenditures should be for these programs. The second is what administrative plans should be followed.

For an answer to both these problems recent experience may be drawn upon. The discussion in this chapter will, therefore, proceed from an analysis of the costs and administration of current programs to an examination of the basis of future policy.

### COSTS OF YOUTH WORK PROGRAMS

The total costs of the youth programs discussed in this study can be estimated only very roughly. Beginning with the NYA, its total expenditures, including contributions by state and local cosponsors of work projects, are estimated by that agency to have been approximately \$114,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940. Of this total, approximately \$83,000,000 was spent for the out-of-school program. More specifically, the total was \$82,642,000, of which the federal government supplied \$67,560,000 and the cosponsors, \$15,082,000.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of the CCC, total expenditures for the same period totaled approximately \$280,000,000, according to officials. After subtracting expenditures for veterans' camps and Indian and territorial activities, the sum of approximately \$245,000,000 is estimated to have been the cost of the camps for junior enrollees.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> These and other figures for the NYA were supplied by its Division of Finance and Statistics.

<sup>2</sup> Data furnished by the director's office of the CCC.

The WPA is the most difficult to study in relation to youth expenditures, because the security workers, as they are called, are not separated by age groups in wages received. By making estimates of the number employed who are younger than 25, and further estimates of the average wages paid to them (depending on their classification, location, and other factors), and still further estimates of the portion of other expenditures that can justifiably be allotted to the youth group, it is possible to arrive at a rough total of \$140,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940.<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that considerably greater total expenditures were made by the WPA in previous years.

Adding the estimates for the three agencies, we obtain the following result:

NYA .....	\$ 83,000,000
CCC (junior enrollees) .....	245,000,000
WPA (under 25) .....	140,000,000
	<hr/>
Total .....	\$468,000,000

Thus it can be seen that during 1939-40, a half billion dollars approximately represents the sum expended for direct financial aid, training, employment, or all three, of unemployed, out-of-school youth between 17 and 25 years of age.

On a per capita basis, the costs of the several programs show marked differences. The average cost per work year for a youth employed in the NYA out-of-school program is about \$314. The federal government's share of this average amounted in 1939-40 to \$257; that of the cosponsors, to \$57.<sup>4</sup> The average cost per junior enrollee in the CCC during 1939-40 was slightly less than \$1,000. The average cost of a junior worker in the WPA during the same period was estimated at \$600.

---

<sup>3</sup> Estimates based on data furnished by the Work Projects Administration.

<sup>4</sup> The average figures are based on a total expenditure of \$82,642,000 (\$67,560,000 by the federal government and \$15,082,000 by cosponsors) and a total of 3,153,000 work months.

*Comparative Magnitude of Expenditures*

Because of rapidly changing concepts of public needs and of justifiable outlays for public purposes, a subjective judgment of a half billion dollars as being in itself a large or a small sum of money is of little value. Some idea of the real meaning of the figures given may be obtained by comparing them with figures for similar or related expenditures. Four criteria may be used for the purpose: total federal expenditures, total federal expenditures for relief in general, total expenditures for all educational purposes, and federal expenditures for vocational education and training.

Total federal expenditures for the fiscal year 1939-40 for all purposes, exclusive of debt retirements, according to a table published by the United States Treasury Department on July 2, 1940, amounted to \$9,537,000,000.<sup>5</sup> This means that the cost of the youth programs in the year ending June 30, 1940 amounted to slightly less than 5 per cent of total federal expenditures.

A more pertinent comparison is that of the expenditures for youth work programs with federal expenditures for relief and public works in general. As is shown by Treasury Department statements, a total of \$1,835,000,000 was spent by the federal government under the various Emergency Relief Administration Acts, from July 1, 1939 to June 30, 1940.<sup>6</sup> Adding to this sum the expenditures for the CCC during the same period, we obtain the figure of \$2,121,000,000. This includes the total expenditures for youth work programs, as well as those for the WPA in employment of workers 25 and more years old, the Farm Security Administration, and a number of minor activities. It does not include payments made by the Social Security Board for public assistance, by the Railroad Retirement Board, or by the Veterans'

---

<sup>5</sup> U. S. Department of the Treasury Press Service No. 21-45, July 2, 1940, Washington, D. C., "Receipts and Expenditures, Actual for 1939 and 1940 . . .," p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> "Report Showing the Status of Funds and Analyses of Expenditures—The Emergency Relief Appropriation Acts of 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, and 1939, as of June 30, 1940" (Washington: Office of the Commissioner of Accounts and Deposits, June 30, 1940). Manuscript.



Administration.<sup>7</sup> A simple calculation reveals the fact that, on this basis, expenditures for youth work programs amounted to approximately 22 per cent of total federal expenditures for all related relief programs.

When the half-billion dollar cost of the youth programs is contrasted with the nation's total expenditures for public school systems, it indicates that more rapid expansion has taken place in the field of youth work programs than in formal education. Indeed, annual expenditures for public education have only slowly returned toward the figure of \$2,600,000,000 which was reached by 1930 and which was then drastically reduced during the ensuing depression years. In 1934 total expenditures amounted to \$1,940,000,000 and by 1938 had risen only to \$2,560,000,000.<sup>8</sup>

From the foregoing figures it would appear that youth work programs involve the expenditure of a sum between 18 and 20 per cent of that spent to support America's entire public school system. The former, however, gives aid to about one and a quarter million young people, or only 4 to 5 per cent as many persons as the approximately 30 million children and youth served by the public schools—elementary, secondary, and higher.<sup>9</sup> So many differences exist, however, in the functions of youth work programs and public school systems that a comparison of expenditures on this level cannot be taken to be more than suggestive. More significant is the fact that various bills for federal contributions

---

<sup>7</sup> The figures here do not cover the expenditures of the states or municipalities for similar purposes.

<sup>8</sup> The totals are for public elementary and secondary and also for higher education as follows: 1930—\$2,317,000,000 for elementary and secondary education, \$289,000,000 for higher education; 1934—\$1,720,000,000 and \$220,000,000; 1938—\$2,233,000,000 and \$331,000,000. For 1930 and 1934 figures, see *Biennial Survey of Education in the United States: 1934-36*, Bulletin, 1937, No. 2 (Washington: U. S. Office of Education, 1939), Vol. II, Chap. I, "Statistical Summary of Education: 1935-36," Table 27, p. 33. The 1938 figures were supplied by the Statistical Division of the U. S. Office of Education.

<sup>9</sup> As of May 1940 the estimated number of youth on work programs was 1,300,000. See Table 1, p. 26. In 1935-36 enrollments in schools and colleges under public control amounted to 27,130,166; see *Biennial Survey of Education in the United States: 1934-36*, Vol. II, Chap. I, Table 5, p. 6. The estimated total for 1940-41, as stated by the Statistical Division of the U. S. Office of Education, is just over 30,000,000.

to public school support, intended to aid in equalizing educational opportunities and to augment total expenditures, have languished in Congress for several years. The most widely considered of these bills calls for contributions of only about \$60,000,000 during the first year.<sup>10</sup>

As is well known, the federal government makes considerable contributions to vocational, technical, and professional education on the basis of various acts of Congress passed for this purpose.<sup>11</sup> During 1939-40 the 69 land-grant colleges (52 for white students and 17 for Negroes) received federal funds amounting to \$30,244,920.<sup>12</sup>

For vocational education,<sup>13</sup> the federal government contributed in 1938-39 a total of \$19,433,394.<sup>14</sup> The total enrollment in the vocational schools which benefited from these funds in 1939 was 2,085,427. This means that the federal government contributed on an average about \$9.30 per student in these vocational schools; the per capita contribution was about \$12.30 for those enrolled in agricultural courses and about \$8.80 per student in the trade and industry classes.<sup>15</sup>

The comparisons made above are merely suggestive of the financial contribution of the federal government to the various

---

<sup>10</sup> S. 1305, 76th Cong., 1st sess., introduced by Senator Elbert D. Thomas of Utah, Feb. 13, 1939, and reported favorably to the Senate on April 3, 1939. (Senate Report 244, which shows total appropriations authorized on pp. 12-13.)

<sup>11</sup> The First and Second Morrill Acts, 1862 and 1890; the Hatch Act, 1887; the Adams Act, 1906; the Nelson amendment to the appropriation act of the Department of Agriculture, 1907; the Smith-Lever Act, 1914; the Smith-Hughes Act, 1917; the Purnell Act, 1925; the Capper-Ketcham Act, 1928; the Bankhead-Jones Act, 1935; and the George-Deen Act, 1936.

<sup>12</sup> Data from Maude Farr, *Preliminary Report: Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, Year Ended June 30, 1940*, Circular 187 (Washington: U. S. Office of Education, 1940), Tables 2 and 5. Mimeo.

<sup>13</sup> This includes salaries of vocational teachers, supervisors, and directors, and the maintenance of teacher training in the fields of agriculture, trade and industry, home economics, and distributive education.

<sup>14</sup> Local and state funds for the same purposes during 1938-39 amounted to \$33,232,777.

<sup>15</sup> Data from *Digest of Annual Reports of State Boards for Vocational Education . . . Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1939* (Washington: U. S. Office of Education, 1940), pp. 1-7 and Tables 9, 10, and 11 in Appendix. Mimeo.

activities involved in educating and preparing youth for their adult tasks. They indicate the meagerness of some of these contributions and the possibility of bringing them into greater consistency than exists at present, on the basis of more carefully considered principles.

### *Inequalities of Costs and Benefits*

The statistical data given indicate considerable inequalities in the use of public funds for more or less similar purposes. To begin with, there is inequality between the federal expenditures for different age groups. From the various estimates of unemployment discussed in Chapter 3, it is probable that approximately one-third of those unemployed in the United States are in the youth group, yet apparently less than one-quarter of total relief expenditures are for youth programs. This condition is perhaps not of very serious import. Young people are indirectly aided by expenditures for other age groups, that is, the dependents include many youth. On the other hand, a large part of the expenditure for youth programs goes directly and indirectly to dependents in other age groups.

Of greater importance are the variations in the costs per person of the different programs. As already pointed out, these costs varied during 1939-40 from \$314 per NYA out-of-school worker to about \$1,000 per enrollee in the CCC. Under the system of payments adopted today an individual young person may receive as little as \$3 a month in the school work program of the NYA or as much as \$45 plus subsistence, clothing, and medical care as a "leader" enrollee in the CCC.

The inequality of costs and of benefits to participants in the various programs might be explained to some extent on the ground of the quantity of work done by the participants. In the school work program of the NYA, for example, the \$3 per month is earned by working for only a few hours, while in the CCC enrollees work for approximately 175 hours a month. The junior workers in the out-of-school program of the NYA, who receive in wages from \$14 a month to \$24, also spend different amounts of time in work.

To some extent also the figures of real costs are much less than the nominal payments would suggest. This is due to the fact that the work done on the various programs has social value and that a percentage of the expenditures for youth work programs is in fact an investment in public works of considerable value.

Just how large a proportion of the costs of youth work programs can be written off on account of the value of the product it is impossible to say. The staff of the American Youth Commission, in its intensive study of the CCC and of the resident centers of the NYA, found it virtually impossible to determine from available figures what portion of the expenditures for these programs might be considered an investment in public works on a basis comparable to similar investments by private industry. Both the CCC and the NYA publish at regular intervals lists of their completed projects, showing such items as the number of bridges built, trails constructed, and miles of fences erected. Neither agency, however, provides figures to show the financial worth of these projects in terms of what they might have cost if executed by private industry, thus making it possible to allocate to such projects the proper proportion of total expenditures of the agencies and at the same time to determine what proportion of the total expenditures should be allocated to training and relief.

As far as is known, the NYA has at no time made any estimates on this basis. The Director of the CCC, however, did make an estimate in his testimony before a congressional committee in the spring of 1940. He said:

I think it fair to state that the net worth of the operations completed will within a very few years more than offset the total cost of the program. At the present time, the present worth of the work completed might reasonably be evaluated at about 78 to 82 per cent of its cost. This figure does not equal 100 per cent because the Civilian Conservation Corps by its very nature is constantly employing green, raw, untrained kids who have never had a job of any kind and making them into competent, hard-working men. There is a natural immediate loss in efficiency under such a process.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> House Committee on Appropriations, 76th Cong., 3d sess., *Department of Labor-Federal Security Agency Appropriations Bill for 1941, Hearings . . . February and March 1940* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), Pt. 2, p. 57.

No details regarding the basis for the estimate of 78 to 82 per cent have been made available by the CCC since that time.

It is clear that, if the sum of \$1,000 is spent in the course of a year for each CCC enrollee and if each enrollee produces work worth between \$780 and \$820 in the open market, the net cost to the CCC in relief, training, building of morale, contributing to the national defense, and so on is not very large. If, on the other hand, the work produced by the enrollee should be worth much less, then the net cost in the other phases of the program is correspondingly larger. The same point is equally valid, using different figures, as to both the NYA and the WPA.

During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940, the cost of the out-of-school program of the NYA, as was stated above, amounted to \$314 per junior worker. On the face of it, this is a smaller outlay than the \$600 per year spent for each WPA worker under 25, or the \$1,000 per year spent for each junior enrollee in the CCC. But there is no way of determining what the real differences are unless more information can be made available on the value of the product and the distribution of costs within each organization.

From the point of view of the young worker, the inequalities of cost are significant chiefly as they are the cause of inequalities in benefits received. It is not merely a question of the differences in wages received, though that is important. Even more important is the difference in the effectiveness of the training offered by one or another program and in the opportunities for finding employment after completion of such a program. The psychological effect of these differences has become accentuated as a result of the national defense program, which often brings together on the same job youth from the different agencies, who may receive unequal wages for the same work done.

### *Basis of Potential Costs*

The costs of youth work programs must be related to the purposes and functions which the programs are to perform. At present, the youth work programs pursue in varying degrees four objectives: relief, training, execution of public works projects,



and building the national defense. Owing to such diversity of purpose, there can be no simple or uniform standard based on need, qualifications, or ability which acts as a determining factor for the benefits extended and costs incurred. The same young person may qualify for any of the current programs, and the costs per person involved would vary accordingly.

Some indications of the extent and basis of potential costs and expenditures may be obtained from the facts submitted in preceding chapters. To begin with, if the NYA program is to be extended to meet at least the needs of those young persons who are awaiting assignment, the funds required would probably amount to about twice what the NYA spends now.<sup>17</sup> If the monthly payments are to be raised by the NYA to lift the young workers above the mere level of subsistence, the costs per person must be increased. If training is to be improved by obtaining a larger and more qualified supervisory staff, more funds are needed to pay for such added service.

Much larger sums would be required if a youth work program is to be regarded as a means for equalizing educational and economic opportunities. The costs involved in such a program would depend upon the economic and social standards applied. If attempted even on a modest scale, the costs would be considerable. The suggestion which has been made from time to time of an annual federal contribution of about a billion dollars would not seem exaggerated in the light of these considerations.

In some respects, the issue is the same as that which is involved in the system of family allowances which has spread rapidly in recent years, and which provides for special additions to the regular wages of the adult worker for each child in the family. One might suggest *youth allowances* as a supplement or parallel to *family allowances*.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> See Table 1, p. 26 and Appendix Table II, p. 158.

<sup>18</sup> For discussion of family allowances see the following articles in *International Labor Review*: Claire Hoffner, "The Compulsory Payment of Family Allowances in Belgium, France, and Italy," XXXII (October 1935), 463-91; P. Goldschmidt, "Family Allowances in Belgium," XXXIV (August 1936), 220-32; Bruno Biagi, "Family Allowances in Italy," XXXV (April 1937), 457-87; and "The Question of Family Allowances in Norway," in "Reports and Enquiries," XL (July 1939), 56-63.

But the parallel can be drawn only in part. Young workers are on the threshold of economic independence and in process of crossing that threshold. Their dependence on family support is at the point of severance, not of becoming closer. What help can be given them must be of a nature to facilitate their transition to adulthood. For the various reasons examined in preceding chapters, it should be more closely related to wages than to social assistance.

In a society which used its taxing power to make the benefits from national resources and from work more nearly equal, there would be a presumption in favor of extending the benefits to youth and thus of increasing the costs of youth work programs. The basic principle of such policy is to extend benefits to a social group in such form that it can be of greatest effectiveness to the group and to society as a whole. This is the principle of maximum benefit at least cost. From a social point of view, the costs of youth work programs would be least if they prepared youth for their adult tasks in such a way as to reduce their liability to economic need and dependence in later life.

#### ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Much of the success of any program depends on its administrative mechanism as well as on the abilities of those in administrative positions. The questions which arise with regard to administration concern: (1) the internal work of each of the organizations carrying on one or another youth work program; (2) their respective relations with other public institutions with which they can or do cooperate; and (3) their own interrelations as affecting the coordination of various parts of the general program.

#### *The Administration of the NYA*<sup>19</sup>

More than any other national agency, the NYA in its out-of-school program has been linked with the needs, conditions, and

---

<sup>19</sup> The administrative problems of the CCC are considered in another forthcoming report of the American Youth Commission, which formed the basis of the Commission's statement, *The Civilian Conservation Corps* (Washington: American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, December 6, 1940).

opportunities of individual local communities. While the relief content of the NYA program has been high, its creation as an individual agency was based upon the premise that it was necessary to do more for unemployed youth than to provide financial aid and temporary employment on public projects, that in some way the youth should be prepared for private employment and helped to obtain such employment. Obviously any steps in this direction depended to some extent on local conditions. What opportunities for employment were available for which youth could be prepared? In what way could potential employers of the youth be best approached? What conditions of education, previous experience, and skills acquired existed among the youth? The answers to these and similar questions were felt to lie in the local communities.

In such a situation, it might have been possible to provide a type of organization similar to that of the school work program of the NYA, which at the beginning was little more than an organization to allocate funds to schools and colleges for their use in providing part-time work projects for needy students. A difficulty, of course, would have been to find local or state agencies which might conduct youth work programs, for no existing agencies were equipped for that purpose at the time. Even if such agencies were found or created within states and local communities, such a procedure would have been contrary to the development of national policy since 1933, by which the national government assumed increasing responsibility for steps to better economic and social conditions.

Accordingly, the administrative plan that was set up and that is now in operation was a compromise between a centralized and a community-operated plan, and the key figures became the officials known as state administrators. To them were allotted funds on the basis of youth population (with reductions or additions on the basis of other considerations), to be spent in projects of their own selection, through employees of their own choice, on youth of their own picking. While there were numerous restrictions and while considerable supervision was exercised from the national office, in essence the organization has been

operated by a group of state administrators, selected and supervised by the national office.

The national office is now a unit in the Federal Security Agency, on a par with the other major units (the Public Health Service, the Office of Education, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Social Security Board). The NYA Administrator is appointed by the President. The Administrator appoints the staff of the national office, the state administrators, and the five regional directors who serve as liaison officials between the national office and the state administrators.

The principle of decentralization runs through the NYA at its various levels of operation. The state administrators are independent in selecting work projects (with some exceptions), in appointing staffs, in selecting the youth, in fixing hours, and, for the most part, in determining matters of state and local procedure. In the national office, the various functions of the NYA are apportioned among division heads who have the responsibility for formulating policies and regulations. In a general way, it may be said that the national office in Washington exercises control with regard to larger policies, general procedures, the keeping of records, and supervisory functions. But operative activities are organized and guided locally, and policies are often initiated locally as well. Coordination from the national office is thus achieved only in part and largely through personal contacts and through local, regional, and national conferences. The NYA is thus operated on a plan of decentralization of authority that is at variance with the administrative plan of most other federal agencies.<sup>20</sup>

As stated above, the decentralization in the NYA is dictated by the nature of the task assigned to it and by the conditions under which it has to be carried out. A good deal of the vitality and flexibility of the NYA is due to the fact that it keeps close to local interests and conditions. But decentralization fosters local views and influences, and that is one of the main causes of some weaknesses of the NYA. As illustrated in pre-

---

<sup>20</sup> For details of NYA organization, see *Handbook of Procedures Memorandum No. 3* (Washington: National Youth Administration, August 1, 1940). Mimeo.

ceding chapters, policies with regard to work projects, related training, labor relations, health, and other matters have not received the unifying stimulus which they might have been given. In the national office there has been a lack of information on vital aspects of NYA work which cannot but hamper a clear vision of what is being done and what ought to be done. There is greater diversity among various states as to essential practices than is either necessary or economical. There has not been enough effort to keep the various state organizations abreast of each other's problems and progress, so that they might benefit from one another's trials and experiments.

In brief, the experience of the NYA illustrates two points. First, that there is a line where decentralization may become diffusion, and it is necessary for efficient administration not to cross that line. Second, that central guidance of policy and central recording of experience are not incompatible with encouragement to local energy and enthusiasm. In other words, while there can be no doubt that the assumptions of the importance of linking a youth work program with local conditions are valid, a unified program calls also for the maintenance of standards of various kinds in each of the communities, and this is possible only through a greater degree of centralization than has been characteristic of the NYA.

Within recent months there has been a tendency within the NYA to strengthen central control and direction of policies and operations. In part, this is due to the participation of the NYA in the work of national defense. The line of development is to establish a closer supervision of the national office over work projects, and to establish more uniform standards with regard to personnel, record-keeping, and reporting. Also, the safety and health programs call for organization on a national basis, and the national office is assuming more direct responsibility for policies on labor and public relations.

### *The NYA and the Public School System*

Of the various public institutions with which the NYA comes



into close contact and to which it has to adjust its program, the public school system is of special importance.<sup>21</sup>

In organizing and developing its program, the NYA has co-operated with the public schools and yet at times has come into conflict with them. The question of these interrelationships has been both persistent and perplexing. The main problems involved have been those of the division of powers and functions and the degree of control to be exercised over youth training programs by local and national authorities.

The problem was clearly formulated in the report to President Roosevelt by the Advisory Committee on Education in February 1938, from which the following pertinent statement in regard to the work programs of both the CCC and NYA may be quoted:

Much dissatisfaction now exists in some quarters over the fact that state and local educational agencies have had so little control or supervision over the two programs. Some educational leaders have proposed that, although the federal government should continue to supply funds for the programs, final authority for the administration of the work camps and other work projects for youth should rest with state educational authorities rather than with the federal government.

Obvious difficulties stand in the way of any such course, particularly in connection with the Civilian Conservation Corps. Much of the work is performed on the public domain; aside from questions of state jurisdiction over areas where the work is performed, many of the enrollees are at work in states other than the state of their residence. A great deal of interstate shifting of enrollees is also required in order to adjust to seasonal conditions. It is therefore doubtful whether it would be possible to set up an effective form of administration through the state governments for a national program of work camps, although some of the states with extensive state parks and forests might well develop similar programs of their own.

It would be much less difficult to shift the work projects of the National Youth Administration to administration by the states, with partial or complete financial support from the federal government through a system of grants. This possibility should be studied, but it probably will not be found practicable or desirable for the present.

There is much question as to what agency of state government should administer a program of work projects for youth if it should be established

---

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of the relations of the NYA to the public employment offices see Chapter 4; for relations with the U. S. Public Health Service see Chapter 5.

under state auspices. State departments of labor, public works, welfare, and education could all establish some claim to the function. If educational values are considered primary, the educational departments would have the best claim, but at present it cannot be contended that they are at all equipped to provide supervision and leadership for the employment and welfare aspects of the task. Few of them have had much experience even with educational activities of the type that should be carried on in connection with work projects.

It should also be noted that any system of administration through statutory grants to the states is likely to be lacking in flexibility and can be adapted only slowly to changing needs. It is therefore recommended that national programs of work camps and work projects for youth be administered by the federal government at least until such time as it is evident that they should be made permanent.

Even though the programs are continued as federal activities, in the future there should be much more emphasis upon cooperation with state and local educational agencies and on the utilization of their facilities so far as possible.<sup>22</sup>

What has been interpreted by some persons as a step toward closer cooperative relations between the NYA and the public schools was taken on July 27, 1940, when an agreement was made by the Administrator of the NYA, the United States Commissioner of Education, and a group of state school officers and state directors of vocational education, defining the respective functions of the NYA and the United States Office of Education. The essence of the agreement is that the NYA is henceforth "to organize and administer programs of work for needy or selected youth," while the educational and training programs for all youth are to be developed and operated under the guidance of the Office of Education. The arrangement means that the NYA will have complete direction and supervision of NYA workers during the time for which they are paid to work but that all related training will be carried on by the schools. The points of the agreement were given official recognition in the First Supplementary Civil Appropriations Act of 1941 which removed "related training" activities from the jurisdiction of the NYA.<sup>23</sup>

In accordance with the agreement, the Administrator of the

---

<sup>22</sup> Advisory Committee on Education, *Report of the Committee* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938), pp. 123-24.

<sup>23</sup> See Chapter 4, p. 65.

NYA instructed the state administrators "to arrange with the schools for all off-the-job training of NYA workers." As the agreement gave rise to questions of interpretation, further instructions on the subject were issued to state NYA administrators in November 1940.<sup>24</sup> These instructions stressed the fact that "no training programs may be financed from funds appropriated to the National Youth Administration, regardless of whether or not the Office of Education arranges appropriate training for NYA personnel." No training is to be given by the NYA on homemaking projects or "any other projects which cannot be operated on a production basis." The state NYA administrators must inform the state vocational educational authorities as to the "kind and amount of related training which appears to be needed on NYA projects and reach necessary agreements as to when and where such training will be provided." The projects are to be so arranged as to permit the youth to avail themselves of the training courses offered, but attendance at such courses will not be a condition for employment on NYA projects.

The agreement between the NYA and the Office of Education on related training has given rise to criticism. There is a feeling that it may affect adversely the educational opportunities of NYA youth. In the first place, as the money is to be used for defense training, it may not be distributed equally throughout the country. Defense industries are concentrated in certain parts of the country, and as the purpose is to train local youth for placement in nearby plants, the youth in these areas will benefit from the training program more than the youth in other sections. Also, since the training can most readily be given through the regular vocational education channels in the states, and since a very large part of the facilities for offering vocational training in the United States are in New York and other eastern states, it is obvious that the program is not likely to reach youth in other sections, especially sparsely settled rural districts where few or no vocational schools exist.

Second, it is felt by some that the range and scope of related

---

<sup>24</sup> See Letter No. Y-166 Supplement No. 2, Nov. 19, 1940, National Youth Administration, Washington, D. C. Mimeo.

training may be curtailed also because the separation of functions necessitates a larger number of supervisory personnel than is practically feasible in many cases, especially on small work projects. Also, more likely than not, under the new arrangement, girls may not receive the consideration they have had in the past in the NYA. Last, but not least, the broader social courses developed to enhance the employability of youth, in the general sense of making them more competent and more mature individuals, are likely to be dropped. Such limitations and restrictions in the training program need not necessarily result by deliberate design of the Office of Education; they might result from the facts that appropriations for training are small, the necessity of adjusting the program to defense purposes urgent, and the mechanism of our public vocational schools for effectuating the training program inadequate.

It is also pointed out that the line between "job training" on work projects, which the NYA is permitted to carry on, and the more formal "related training" is often tenuous. If the two parties to the agreement insist on the letter of the document, friction between foremen and supervisors on NYA projects and local vocational and school authorities is hardly avoidable.

The agreement between the NYA and the Office of Education is in line with the general policy which the Office has pursued. It duplicates in essentials the arrangement which the Office of Education has made, for instance, with the Federal Committee on Apprenticeship. But consistency in policy can only be a virtue to the extent to which the policy itself is justifiable and correct. There would seem to be little doubt that, if carried out too literally and in a spirit of jurisdictional jealousy, the agreement is likely to undo much of the training value which the NYA work projects are expected to have.

The meaning and application of the agreement with regard to related training are likely to form subjects of continued discussion in the near future. The issues involved are in fact larger than the terms of the agreement and bear upon the whole question of the practical and administrative coordination of all youth training programs.

*Problems of Coordination*

The need for coordinating the educational and vocational work of the federal government has long been recognized. Since the organization of the Federal Security Agency, a coordinator has been appointed to iron out differences and to promote greater cooperation between the NYA, the CCC, and the Office of Education, all of which have been placed within the Agency. However, the NYA, the CCC, and the Office of Education are not the only organizations concerned with the training of youth. The WPA is involved in a measure to the extent to which it employs young persons under 25 years of age; it is part of the Federal Works Agency. There is the Federal Committee on Apprenticeship under the jurisdiction of the United States Department of Labor. Training and vocational activities are carried on also by other federal agencies.

The problem of coordination may appear mostly as one of administrative centralization and control. If a national youth agency were established, it is claimed, it would bring under one roof the various federal activities on behalf of youth and would eliminate difficulties due to division of functions and consequent conflicts of policy and jurisdiction.

There is no question that administrative dispersion is not conducive to unity of policy. But it is important to point out that the problem of coordination is wider and more complex. It stems from two conditions: first, that at various points the activities on behalf of youth overlap with general educational and vocational functions; and second, that the latter cut across diverse economic, social, and cultural interests in such a way as to create disagreements and conflicts. The perennial debates as to the place of vocational training in a general system of public education illustrate the first condition. The friction between employers, organized labor, and civic organizations on such questions as the relation of apprenticeship to the technical needs of the national economy and the value of general education for economic efficiency and opportunity illustrate the second



point. The diversity of local, state, and federal interests also calls for adjustment and reconciliation.

Under these conditions, the development of a unified national policy for the education and training of youth is only in part a question of organization and administration. In even larger measure, it is a problem of developing a greater degree of teamwork among federal and local government and school agencies in their own interests as well as in the interest of youth.

---

## 9

# CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

---

THIS STUDY has been predicated on the idea that we have and shall continue to have a "youth problem" and that the roots of this problem lie in social-economic conditions. The essence of the problem is the need for facilitating the transition of young people from school and family-dependence to work and economic self-dependence. The complexities of the problem arise in large measure out of existing inequalities in regional resources, occupational rewards, and income opportunities of various groups of the population. These complexities are accentuated by the inadequacies of our educational and vocational institutions.

### BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Like other social problems (such as the child, labor, or farm problems) the youth problem calls for public action, not only during economic or political emergencies but also in normal times. All societies have at all periods of history made provision for guiding and aiding the youth in their transition to economic and social maturity. The question is: What is the most effective and most appropriate way of doing the same thing in our own day and time?

One of the answers to this question is that of public youth work programs. There are other conceivable answers.<sup>1</sup> But youth work programs are no longer a mere theoretical proposal. They have been developed in practice in this, as in other countries, on a

---

<sup>1</sup>Proposals have been made, for instance, to support all youth to a specified age (say 21 years) from special social funds; or, vice versa, to make youth between certain ages do all the work. See, for example, Prestonia Mann Martin, *Prohibiting Poverty* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1933).

considerable scale. They are now part of our social-economic mechanism and exercise considerable influence on the activities, hopes, and plans of the boys and girls of the country. The practical issues today are thus whether we shall develop these programs further, how much further, in what direction, under what auspices, and by what methods.

In seeking the answer to these questions, two larger considerations of policy must be taken into account: (1) the relation of youth work programs to the general aims of social advancement, and (2) their relation to the needs of democratic citizenship. In connection with the first consideration, youth work programs may be regarded as part of a general program to meet the needs of underprivileged American citizens in every age group. That would mean connecting youth programs with educational programs for young people under 18, on the one hand, and with relief and employment programs for adults, on the other. It would mean, for instance, that youth programs would be linked with provisions for the subsistence and care of underprivileged children as well as for improved instruction in schools.<sup>2</sup> There would also be a tie-up between youth work programs, the public employment service, social security provisions, and relief and re-employment programs.

The second consideration leads to the idea of making youth work programs part of a general scheme for the training of youth in the ideas and ideals of democracy. In accordance with this idea, youth work programs would be an element in a system of national labor and citizenship training in which youth would do work of benefit to themselves and to the nation as a means of obtaining experience in work and in communal living.

The objections against youth work programs are serious but not conclusive. Such programs can be developed on a permanent basis and on a considerable scale without danger or detriment either to the present economic system or to democratic ways of living. Those who fear the growth of a "youth economy" in competition with "adult economy" are making a mountain out of a

---

<sup>2</sup> See the program outlined by the Advisory Committee on Education, *Report of the Committee* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938), pp. 194-221.

molehill. The main work of society can be done only by the adult working population which has definitely entered the productive system and found its place in it. Despite all technical improvements, this work demands, and will continue to demand, the energy, skill, steadiness, and application of the millions of grown-up men and women who form the backbone of the gainfully employed population of the country. The work done by young workers on public programs can never be more than secondary and subsidiary in character and but a small fraction of the national output in volume or value. The competition of youth work programs with regular and normal industrial activities is of a minor and local character. At most, it affects a small number of adult workers and a few industries.<sup>3</sup>

Those who see in youth work programs a negation of and danger to democracy are drawing parallels with conditions in totalitarian countries. But such parallels are not always illuminating. One can point to democratic countries where youth programs have been successfully carried out in a democratic spirit and in ways which have reinforced the democratic system of the country. The point is that youth programs can be used in different ways and for different political and social purposes. If we can make these programs serve the needs of youth in a democratic way, the faith of youth will become more firmly attached to democratic ideals and institutions. Youth programs can be a source of strength to democracy to the extent to which democracy can use them to aid the material and spiritual progress of youth.

The force of circumstances has made youth programs so far a series of emergency activities to repair the deficiencies of large numbers of young people who were emerging from adolescence without adequate means or preparation for building their economic and social well-being. These programs have thus been palliative in character, not preventive. The task ahead is to make youth work programs a part of a general plan for the education and care of youth, on the one hand, and of a pro-

---

<sup>3</sup> This statement is supported by a comparison of the volume and value of national output in various industries with the funds allocated to present or prospective youth work programs and with the productive results of these programs.

gram of social-economic advancement, on the other. The assumption is that greater national responsibility and provision for the needs of children and young persons under 18 would eliminate some of the conditions found among the youth of today, such as a relatively high percentage of illiteracy, physical disability, poor health, and undeveloped aptitudes for work, and would enable the children of tomorrow, as they grow into the 18-24 age group, to find educational and employment opportunities with better success than members of the youth group do today. On the other hand, a developed program for raising the standards of living of the population in general, through increasing the earning capacity and opportunities of the adult gainful workers of the nation, would give youth a better start in life in their family groups. Thus, youth work programs would become a better integrated part of a general policy to assure greater equality of economic opportunity for the individual and democratic cooperation in the interests of the nation.

#### LINES OF SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

The considerations above are the basis of the specific suggestions and recommendations which may be offered at the present time in the interests of a general youth policy. It cannot be said that the various proposals now under public discussion answer the purposes indicated. Some of them are, in fact, not fully in accord with one another. There is, for instance, an inherent clash at the present time between the proposal discussed in preceding chapters for compulsory government service by the country's youth for the period of one year and recommendations like that of the American Youth Commission for the provision of employment to all youth. The former sets apart all youth of a certain age, say 20 or 21, using their services and providing training for them for a year, but making no provision for them afterwards or for youth of other ages. The latter proposal calls for work and training to be given to all youth from 16 to 24, inclusive, who need them and are unable to obtain them through private channels, but it has no special reference to defense. Again, the former proposal reaches to all classes of youth



of the prescribed age, while the latter restricts itself to unemployed youth. Thus, neither of the proposals alone is an adequate program for youth in view of the new exigencies of national defense and of youth development.

Such clashes of program are of importance practically. For instance, the acceptance of the proposal for a one-year program, involving very large expenditures for the blanket employment of youth of one particular age, might very well result in a diminution of other current youth work programs. Exclusive reliance on the military aspects of the problem might result in the neglect of the underlying needs of youth to prepare for peace.

Great as the immediate emergency is, it is necessary to continue to plan youth work programs on a more general basis. The needs of defense should be integrated with considerations of peacetime problems and responsibilities. There should be no real conflict in this procedure if the concepts that have been discussed in preceding chapters remain as dominating factors of policy.

The suggestions and recommendations which are offered here as a basis for further discussion may be considered under three headings: (1) expansion and improvement of present youth work programs; (2) incorporation of youth work programs into a system of national labor and citizenship training; and (3) administrative adjustments.

### *Improvement of Youth Work Programs*

1. There seems to be no question as to the need for continuing the present youth work programs as long as there is a large number of young persons out of school and unable to find employment in private industry. Even if youth work programs are to be conducted on such a provisional basis, they should be expanded and improved.

2. Current youth work programs might be expanded to provide at least for all the youth now registered and awaiting assignment. Selection and assignment of youth should be made more carefully so as to give youth the maximum benefits from their participation in such programs.

3. Youth work projects should be geared to the needs of national defense; efforts, however, should be made to diversify projects in line with available knowledge of occupational trends. Local, state, and national studies of occupational changes should be carried on.

4. New and more diversified types of projects should be organized for girls and young women. An analysis of the occupations in which women are now employed, and of the need for an increase in the services supplied by these occupations, would provide a clue to the problem.

5. "Production-for-use" projects could be further developed. They can be of increasing importance in the near future, in view of the fact that the development of national defense industries may cause shortages in the supply of consumers' commodities which will affect particularly the low-income groups of the people.

6. The supervisory staff on work projects should be improved by an in-service training system.

7. Related training courses should be enlarged and maintained in close contact with work on projects. Efforts should be made to increase the training value of projects by transferring workers between jobs and, whenever desirable and possible, between localities.

8. A general educational program should be established for youth on work programs, including courses dealing with current national and international developments.

9. The safety service should be improved in line with standards established by the United States Department of Labor.

10. The health services for enrolled youth call for enlargement in line with the program of the United States Public Health Service.

11. The monthly payments for youth should be increased, as economic conditions and the federal budget permit.

### *A National Labor and Citizenship Training Service*

1. The idea of a national labor and citizenship training service has merit both from a vocational and a social point of view. But

all necessary regard must be had for developing it in accord with the spirit and ideals of American democracy.

2. A national labor and citizenship training service may be conceived as having two parts. The first would apply to all young persons aged 16 to 21, inclusive, and would consist in combining their formal schooling with work experience at various stages of their educational or working life. The second part would apply to those between the ages of 21 and 24 and would take the form of organized activities that would have a national service character and at the same time be of benefit to the individual. The young people would spend a specified period of time in these activities in such a way as to cause the least possible disruption of their normal occupational and family life. The first part of the program would inculcate the idea of work into the minds of youth and would help prepare them for vocational and professional life. The second would be designed to organize a system of training in national service.

3. The proposed national service should be introduced gradually, by reorganizing the present system of instruction in the public schools and by expanding youth work programs, independently or in connection with secondary and vocational schools. It would be desirable to make the system voluntary and selective at first, as discussed in Chapter 3. It could become universal as its principles and application proved helpful to individuals and of value to the national interest. The following concrete measures may be suggested as steps in the process:

- a.* Boys and girls leaving elementary schools and not entering private industry or secondary schools to do work having training value chiefly, under guidance and direction of secondary and vocational schools.
- b.* Boys and girls in high schools to be employed in some work having training value, such work to be given credit toward graduation.
- c.* Young persons between 18 and 20 leaving high school and entering private industry to take continuation courses and also

to be employed on projects of a public interest during specified intervals.

*d.* Boys and girls leaving high school and not entering college or private work to be employed on public works for specified periods of time.

*e.* College boys and girls to be engaged on work projects in connection with their educational interests and on related training courses, such work to be counted toward their graduation.

*f.* The national labor and citizenship training service in its second phase to be civilian in character and under the control of civilian administrators. The various youth programs now in existence to be gradually incorporated into the service.

*g.* All work programs and the national training system to be combined with general educational and recreational services so as to broaden the opportunities of every American for as varied a social and cultural life as possible.

### *Administrative Adjustments*

1. The coordination of youth work programs in the Federal Security Agency could be further developed either through greater voluntary cooperation or through increased powers of coordinating officials. However, care should be taken to limit such coordination primarily to integration of policy. Early practical consideration should be given to the proposal for a national youth service administration.

2. A federal-state youth policy conference might be established as a means of developing a unified and comprehensive youth program. This conference should be composed of federal administrators of youth work programs, public employment service officials, the United States Commissioner of Education, and state officials in charge of educational and vocational institutions. The conference should meet regularly and should have a budget for carrying on its activities and for planning its work. It might also have an advisory committee of representatives from the fields of business, labor, farming, and the social sciences.

These suggestions are points in a general program which can be carried out only gradually. The importance of the particular points may change as different parts of the program are put into effect and as social-economic conditions change. What is essential is the direction of the movement from youth work programs as an emergency measure to youth work programs as an integral element in a national counseling, guidance, training, placement, and citizenship service for youth. In this movement, the results will be beneficial in proportion to the sense of community that can be developed among all groups involved and to the extent to which the program furthers the harmonious growth of both the nation and its youth.



## APPENDIX

Supplementary Tables Referred to in the Text



TABLE I  
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF YOUTH IN THE UNITED STATES IN EACH UNEMPLOYMENT CLASS, BY SEX AND AGE,  
DURING WEEK OF NOVEMBER 14-20, 1937 <sup>a b</sup>

Employment class and age	Total	Male	Female	Estimated number of youth as a percentage of:						
				Total youth population			Total youth in labor market			
				Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	
Totally unemployed <sup>e</sup>										
15-24.....	3,395,000	1,984,000	1,411,000	14.6	17.0	12.3	26.7	25.5	28.5	
15-19.....	1,681,000	940,000	741,000	14.0	15.3	12.8	36.5	34.3	39.4	
20-24.....	1,714,000	1,044,000	670,000	15.2	18.8	11.9	21.3	20.8	22.0	
Partly unemployed <sup>d</sup>										
15-24.....	1,502,000	992,000	510,000	6.3	8.1	4.5	11.5	12.2	10.5	
15-19.....	562,000	355,000	207,000	4.5	5.4	3.6	11.8	12.2	11.2	
20-24.....	940,000	637,000	303,000	8.1	11.0	5.4	11.4	12.2	10.1	
Employed on emergency relief jobs <sup>e</sup>										
15-24.....	528,000	385,000	143,000	2.0	2.8	1.1	3.6	4.3	2.6	
15-19.....	253,000	184,000	69,000	1.8	2.6	1.0	4.7	5.8	3.2	
20-24.....	275,000	201,000	74,000	2.1	3.1	1.2	3.0	3.5	2.3	
Totally unemployed and employed on relief work <sup>f</sup>										
15-24.....	3,923,000	2,369,000	1,554,000	16.6	19.8	13.4	30.3	29.8	31.1	
15-19.....	1,934,000	1,124,000	810,000	15.8	17.9	13.8	41.2	40.1	42.6	
20-24.....	1,989,000	1,245,000	744,000	17.3	21.9	13.1	24.3	24.3	24.3	
Totally unemployed, partly unemployed, and employed on relief work										
15-24.....	5,425,000	3,361,000	2,064,000	22.9	27.9	17.9	41.8	42.0	41.6	
15-19.....	2,496,000	1,479,000	1,017,000	20.3	23.3	17.4	52.9	52.3	53.8	
20-24.....	2,929,000	1,882,000	1,047,000	25.4	32.9	18.5	35.7	36.5	34.4	

<sup>a</sup> Based on *Final Report on Total and Partial Unemployment* (Washington: Census of Partial Employment, Unemployment, and Occupations, 1938), Vol. IV, Table 4, p. 12.

<sup>b</sup> Includes an undeterminable number of youth attending school full time or part time, helping in the work of the household or the family business, or engaged in homemaking activity (young married women).

<sup>c</sup> No employment whatever at nonrelief or relief jobs.

<sup>d</sup> Employed other than full time and wanting more work.

<sup>e</sup> WPA, NYA, CCC, and so forth.

<sup>f</sup> Including part-time workers on nonrelief jobs not wanting more employment.

TABLE II

NUMBER OF CERTIFIED YOUTH AWAITING ASSIGNMENT TO NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL WORK PROGRAM, UNITED STATES AND TERRITORIES, SEPTEMBER 30, 1940<sup>a</sup>

State or territory	Number awaiting assignment		
	Total	Male	Female
Total.....	418,399	226,536	191,863
Alabama.....	12,534	4,560	7,974
Arizona.....	676	310	366
Arkansas.....	9,602	6,363	3,239
California.....	7,418	3,874	3,544
Colorado.....	1,309	650	659
Connecticut.....	1,057	133	924
Delaware.....	341	144	197
District of Columbia.....	651	161	490
Florida.....	15,943	9,387	6,556
Georgia.....	15,692	7,621	8,071
Idaho.....	1,028	513	515
Illinois.....	19,244	10,639	8,605
Indiana.....	7,358	3,625	3,733
Iowa.....	4,476	2,007	2,469
Kansas.....	5,535	4,087	1,448
Kentucky.....	9,277	5,082	4,195
Louisiana.....	7,776	3,755	4,021
Maine.....	1,342	738	604
Maryland.....	2,166	707	1,459
Massachusetts.....	9,987	3,979	6,008
Michigan.....	10,114	4,891	5,223
Minnesota.....	4,635	2,706	1,929
Mississippi.....	12,888	7,162	5,726
Missouri.....	11,305	6,012	5,293
Montana.....	1,877	755	1,122
Nebraska.....	3,200	1,582	1,618
Nevada.....	37	15	22
New Hampshire.....	871	270	601
New Jersey.....	9,490	4,717	4,773
New Mexico.....	2,349	1,296	1,053
New York City and Long Island.....	6,001	2,708	3,293
New York (Excl. N. Y. C. and L. I.).....	8,768	4,894	3,874
North Carolina.....	15,622	7,363	8,259
North Dakota.....	3,894	2,277	1,617
Ohio.....	16,991	9,674	7,317
Oklahoma.....	23,503	12,936	10,567
Oregon.....	1,171	294	877
Pennsylvania.....	44,061	28,269	15,792
Rhode Island.....	622	186	436
South Carolina.....	1,648	536	1,112

TABLE II—*Continued*

State or territory	Number awaiting assignment		
	Total	Male	Female
South Dakota.....	2,733	1,368	1,365
Tennessee.....	11,848	6,237	5,611
Texas.....	26,728	15,430	11,298
Utah.....	2,689	1,672	1,017
Vermont.....	877	356	521
Virginia.....	7,201	3,580	3,621
Washington.....	2,319	992	1,327
West Virginia.....	11,388	8,212	3,176
Wisconsin.....	6,833	4,474	2,359
Wyoming.....	367	99	268
Puerto Rico.....	32,957	17,238	15,719

\* Data from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

TABLE III

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF JOB SEEKERS REGISTERED AT PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OFFICES,  
APRIL 1940<sup>a</sup>

Age	Total		Men	Women	Veterans
	Number	Per cent			
All ages.....	5,084,178	100.0	3,796,690	1,287,488	233,123
Under 21.....	495,332	9.7	288,762	206,570	—
21–24.....	769,740	15.1	529,993	239,747	—
25–29.....	793,204	15.6	587,450	205,754	—
30–34.....	637,651	12.5	480,954	156,697	—
35–39.....	521,172	10.3	394,835	126,337	4,265
40–44.....	498,118	9.8	382,761	115,357	73,818
45–49.....	419,987	8.3	332,934	87,053	98,593
50–54.....	371,110	7.3	302,978	68,132	46,176
55–59.....	287,454	5.7	242,473	44,981	6,127
60–64.....	187,889	3.7	161,697	26,192	3,001
65 and over.....	101,051	2.0	90,702	10,349	1,035
Unclassified.....	1,470	— <sup>b</sup>	1,151	319	108

<sup>a</sup> Bureau of Employment Security, *Inventory of Job Seekers at Public Employment Offices, April 1940* (Washington: Social Security Board, 1940), Table 2. Mimeo.

<sup>b</sup> Less than one-tenth of one per cent.



TABLE IV  
ESTIMATED GROSS ANNUAL ENTRANCE OF YOUTH INTO THE LABOR MARKET, IN THE  
UNITED STATES, BY AGE AND SEX<sup>a</sup>

Age	Population (1930)		Per cent of persons of specified age gainfully occupied		Annual addition of new workers 10-25 years of age		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
					1,670,000	1,121,000	549,000
9.....	1,275,000	1,237,000	—	—	—	—	—
10.....	1,265,000	1,235,000	1	—	—	—	—
11.....	1,167,000	1,152,000	2	1	25,000	13,000	12,000
12.....	1,261,000	1,219,000	3	1.5	18,000	12,000	6,000
13.....	1,169,000	1,154,000	4	2	19,000	13,000	6,000
14.....	1,206,000	1,176,000	9	4	81,000	58,000	23,000
15.....	1,155,000	1,141,000	16	8	131,000	84,000	47,000
16.....	1,182,000	1,185,000	33	17	299,000	196,000	103,000
17.....	1,157,000	1,139,000	50	28	331,000	201,000	130,000
18.....	1,158,000	1,200,000	62	36	230,000	139,000	91,000
19.....	1,106,000	1,129,000	79	45	305,000	197,000	108,000
20.....	1,066,000	1,156,000	81	47	45,000	22,000	23,000
21.....	1,112,000	1,099,000	87	46	64,000	64,000	—
22.....	1,079,000	1,124,000	92	44	56,000	56,000	—
23.....	1,046,000	1,085,000	94	42	22,000	22,000	—
24.....	1,033,000	1,071,000	96	37	21,000	21,000	—
25.....	1,012,000	1,074,000	97	35	10,000	10,000	—

<sup>a</sup> Based on *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Population* (Washington: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1933), Vol. II, Table 21, p. 595, and Vol. IV, p. 40, and on unpublished census data. See Table V, p. 161.

TABLE V  
GAINFULLY OCCUPIED YOUTH IN THE UNITED STATES, 1930, BY SEX, AGE, AND RACE<sup>a</sup>

Sex and age	All races			White <sup>b</sup>			Negro		
	Total	Gainfully occupied		Total	Gainfully occupied		Total	Gainfully occupied	
		Number	Per cent		Number	Per cent		Number	Per cent
Male									
16.....	1,181,920	386,511	32.7	1,058,030	319,012	30.2	123,890	67,499	54.5
17.....	1,157,150	577,983	49.9	1,036,156	495,629	47.8	120,994	82,354	68.1
18, 19.	2,264,107	1,599,768	70.7	2,030,407	1,408,945	69.4	233,700	190,823	81.7
20-24..	5,336,815	4,799,505	89.9	4,783,193	4,281,798	89.5	553,622	517,707	93.5
Female									
16.....	1,185,395	201,306	17.0	1,051,560	163,022	15.5	133,835	38,284	28.6
17.....	1,138,672	313,041	27.5	1,014,681	269,606	26.6	123,991	43,435	35.0
18, 19.	2,329,172	942,445	40.5	2,055,491	828,903	40.3	273,681	113,542	41.5
20-24..	5,533,563	2,347,548	42.4	4,883,994	2,048,445	41.9	649,569	299,103	46.0

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Population*, Vol. II, Table 29, pp. 1180-81.

<sup>b</sup> Includes white and all other races except Negroes.

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ESTIMATED POPULATION 15-24 YEARS OF AGE, INCLUSIVE, BY SEX, AGE, AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS, NOVEMBER 1937<sup>a</sup>

Sex and age	Total population of specified age	Not available for employment <sup>b</sup>	Fully employed and part-time workers not desiring work	Totally unemployed	Emergency workers	Partly unemployed
Male						
15.....	1,212,000	1,079,000	67,000	47,000	2,000	16,000
16.....	1,248,000	930,000	131,000	135,000	12,000	39,000
17.....	1,178,000	666,000	216,000	192,000	39,000	65,000
18.....	1,248,000	434,000	379,000	282,000	56,000	97,000
19.....	1,229,000	288,000	490,000	286,000	49,000	117,000
15-19.....	6,115,000	3,418,000	1,266,000	936,000	159,000	330,000
20-24.....	5,779,000	607,000	3,271,000	1,086,000	179,000	636,000
Female						
15.....	1,188,000	1,121,000	23,000	34,000	1,000	7,000
16.....	1,223,000	1,028,000	62,000	104,000	9,000	18,000
17.....	1,154,000	802,000	135,000	165,000	12,000	40,000
18.....	1,224,000	612,000	278,000	244,000	17,000	73,000
19.....	1,205,000	515,000	375,000	214,000	23,000	78,000
15-19.....	5,994,000	4,076,000	875,000	767,000	60,000	216,000
20-24.....	5,752,000	2,692,000	1,996,000	684,000	69,000	311,000

<sup>a</sup> The data used in this table are based on the *Final Report on Total and Partial Unemployment*, Vol. IV, Tables 8 and 69, pp. 23, 134, and on the population estimates for single years, 15 to 19, by the Scripps Foundation. The latter were distributed by sex according to the proportion for the whole group 15-19 evident in Table 69 of the *Final Report*. No correction has been made for discrepancies between the vertical totals of the separate ages on the 15-19 groups and the figures for these groups as a whole; the percentages used in computing both sets of figures were those given in the *Final Report* and are to the nearest tenth of a per cent. The total given for the female population 15-19 is the sum of the separate age estimates computed from the Scripps Foundation figures and happens to be 4,000 in excess of the figure for this group in Table 64 of the *Final Report*.

<sup>b</sup> Includes the ill and voluntarily idle.

TABLE VII

ESTIMATED POPULATION UNDER 25 YEARS OF AGE, 1940-60, BY AGE AND SEX<sup>a</sup>

Age and sex	Estimated population of specified age <sup>b</sup>				
	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960
Total population	132,629,000	137,607,000	142,301,000	146,458,000	150,010,000
Under 15 . . . . .	33,659,000	32,874,000	33,290,000	33,323,000	32,879,000
Males . . . . .	17,141,000	16,752,000	16,972,000	16,994,000	16,771,000
Females . . . . .	16,518,000	16,122,000	16,318,000	16,329,000	16,108,000
15-19 . . . . .	12,425,000	11,840,000	10,727,000	10,886,000	11,079,000
Males . . . . .	6,278,000	6,020,000	5,460,000	5,544,000	5,645,000
Females . . . . .	6,147,000	5,820,000	5,267,000	5,342,000	5,434,000
20-24 . . . . .	11,760,000	12,421,000	11,852,000	10,757,000	10,919,000
Males . . . . .	5,934,000	6,290,000	6,040,000	5,490,000	5,575,000
Females . . . . .	5,826,000	6,131,000	5,812,000	5,267,000	5,344,000

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Population Statistics: 1. National Data* (Washington: National Resources Committee, 1937), Table 2, p. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Assuming medium fertility and mortality and a net immigration of 100,000 foreign-born persons annually.

TABLE VIII

PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT IN FAMILIES OF NYA YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES AND ALL RACES, NEW YORK STATE, 1936<sup>a</sup>

Number of privately employed individuals in young person's family	Number of NYA youth studied
Total youth studied . . . . .	10,400
0 . . . . .	6,524
1 . . . . .	3,093
2 . . . . .	670
3 . . . . .	85
4 . . . . .	3
More than 4 . . . . .	1
No information . . . . .	24

<sup>a</sup> Data from Douglas G. Haring, "The Personnel Record Study" (Syracuse: New York State National Youth Administration, 1938), Vol. II, p. 53 and Table W-76-78. Manuscript.

TABLE IX

EMERGENCY EMPLOYMENT IN FAMILIES OF NYA YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES AND ALL RACES,  
NEW YORK STATE, 1936<sup>a</sup>

Number of individuals in young person's family engaged in emergency employment	Number of NYA youth studied
Total youth studied.....	10,400
0.....	12
1.....	4,111
2.....	5,449
3.....	736
4.....	60
More than 4.....	8
No information.....	24

<sup>a</sup> Data from Haring, "Personnel Record Study," Vol. II, p. 55 and Table W-76-78.

TABLE X

NUMBER IN FAMILY AS REPORTED BY NYA YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES AND ALL RACES,  
NEW YORK STATE, 1936<sup>a</sup>

Number in young person's family	Number of NYA youth studied
Total youth studied.....	10,400
1.....	45
2.....	368
3.....	1,079
4.....	1,481
5.....	1,613
6.....	1,513
7.....	1,281
8.....	1,001
9.....	795
10.....	486
11-12.....	509
Over 12.....	218
No information.....	11

Mean number in family: 6.234 persons.

Total number of individuals in families of NYA youth studied: 64,840 persons.

<sup>a</sup> Data from Haring, "Personnel Record Study," Vol. II, p. 36 and Table W-61-78-DS.



TABLE XI  
 YOUTH ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROJECTS IN MARCH 1940 AS PERCENTAGES OF THE  
 YOUTH POPULATION REPORTED IN THE 1930 CENSUS, BY REGION AND STATE

Region and state	Youth population, 18-24 incl. (1930) <sup>a</sup>	Number, 18-24 incl., employed on NYA out-of-school work projects (March 1940) <sup>b</sup>	Per cent of NYA youth, March 1940, to youth population in 1930
TOTAL.....	15,463,657	324,636	2.1
NORTHEAST			
Connecticut.....	189,788	3,589	1.9
Maine.....	87,250	2,567	2.9
Massachusetts.....	489,686	11,051	2.3
New Hampshire.....	50,019	1,254	2.5
New York City.....	941,955	11,506	1.2
New York State.....	638,606	11,841	1.8
Rhode Island.....	81,566	1,818	2.2
Vermont.....	40,115	845	2.1
MID-ATLANTIC			
Delaware.....	28,620	623	2.2
District of Columbia.....	64,425	1,284	2.0
Illinois.....	945,781	19,031	2.0
Indiana.....	379,237	7,609	2.0
Kentucky.....	323,223	5,622	1.7
Maryland.....	204,357	4,766	2.3
Michigan.....	582,470	13,635	2.3
New Jersey.....	494,784	7,601	1.5
Ohio.....	794,872	14,696	1.8
Pennsylvania.....	1,171,722	21,269	1.8
West Virginia.....	222,716	7,120	3.2
Wisconsin.....	349,386	5,984	1.7
SOUTH CENTRAL			
Alabama.....	371,317	8,047	2.2
Arkansas.....	254,835	6,603	2.6
Florida.....	192,591	4,563	2.4
Georgia.....	421,009	7,751	1.8
Louisiana.....	293,598	5,708	1.3
Mississippi.....	286,358	6,033	2.1
North Carolina.....	444,580	11,486	2.6
Oklahoma.....	332,188	7,888	2.4
South Carolina.....	249,210	4,225	1.7
Tennessee.....	359,690	8,641	2.4
Texas.....	824,233	16,782	2.0
Virginia.....	316,416	7,710	2.4

TABLE XI—*Continued*

Region and state	Youth population, 18-24 incl. (1930) <sup>a</sup>	Number, 18-24 incl., employed on NYA out-of-school work projects (March 1940) <sup>b</sup>	Per cent of NYA youth, March 1940, to youth population in 1930
MIDWEST			
Iowa.....	288,752	7,825	2.7
Kansas.....	231,925	6,251	2.7
Minnesota.....	307,827	6,896	2.2
Missouri.....	444,306	8,243	1.9
Nebraska.....	173,066	3,727	2.2
North Dakota.....	91,191	3,515	3.9
South Dakota.....	87,069	4,143	4.8
WEST			
Arizona.....	56,534	1,320	2.3
California.....	654,107	12,298	1.9
Colorado.....	125,017	3,204	2.6
Idaho.....	54,732	1,801	3.3
Montana.....	62,927	1,981	3.1
Nevada.....	10,065	277	2.8
New Mexico.....	55,048	2,163	3.9
Oregon.....	111,357	2,769	2.5
Utah.....	66,771	2,484	3.7
Washington.....	185,701	5,881	3.2
Wyoming.....	28,659	710	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Data from *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Population* (Washington: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1933), Vol. II, Table 27, pp. 671-73, and Table 34, p. 744.

<sup>b</sup>Information from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

TABLE XII

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF YOUTH EMPLOYED ON NYA WORK PROJECTS IN SEVEN STATES,  
WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 25, 1939, BY RACE AND SEX <sup>a</sup>  
(In percentages)

Age	All youth	White		Negro	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
18-25.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
18.....	18.7	17.8	20.7	18.2	14.5
19.....	26.1	24.9	27.1	28.4	26.4
20.....	19.9	20.0	19.2	20.8	22.3
21.....	13.4	14.2	12.2	13.2	14.4
22.....	9.8	10.2	9.5	9.1	9.4
23.....	6.6	6.9	6.4	6.0	6.9
24.....	4.7	5.2	4.2	3.6	5.3
25.....	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Characteristics of Youth Employed on NYA Work Projects* (Washington: National Youth Administration, 1939), p. 2. Mimeo. The survey included 22,228 youth in Colorado, District of Columbia, Georgia, Kentucky, Nebraska, Oregon, and Rhode Island.

TABLE XIII

PREVIOUS EDUCATION OF YOUTH EMPLOYED ON NYA WORK PROJECTS IN SEVEN STATES,  
WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 25, 1939, BY RACE AND SEX <sup>a</sup>  
(In percentages)

Education (grades completed)	All youth studied	White		Negro	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
All grades.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No education.....	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.2
Grammar school					
Below 8th grade.....	23.4	26.5	17.0	36.7	20.0
8th grade.....	17.3	20.3	15.2	12.0	8.5
High school					
1 to 3 years.....	30.1	30.1	29.1	34.1	33.4
4th year.....	25.6	19.7	35.7	12.7	29.6
College					
1 to 3 years.....	3.0	2.8	2.5	3.6	7.2
4th year <sup>b</sup> .....	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	1.1

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Characteristics of Youth Employed on NYA Work Projects*, p. 5. For survey coverage see Table XII, footnote a.

<sup>b</sup> Only about one young person in 10,000 completed a year of graduate study.

## YOUTH WORK PROGRAMS

TABLE XIV

PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE OF YOUTH EMPLOYED ON NYA WORK PROJECTS IN SEVEN STATES, WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 25, 1939, BY RACE AND SEX <sup>a</sup>

Previous work experience	All youth studied		White		Negro	
	Num-ber	Per cent	Male per cent	Female per cent	Male per cent	Female per cent
Unduplicated total.....	21,944	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No previous work experience..	11,832	53.9	46.7	65.3	39.7	52.2
Public employment.....	1,456	6.6	11.3	1.9	5.5	1.9
Private employment.....	9,184	41.9	46.2	33.3	56.8	46.8
Both public and private.....	528	2.4	4.2	0.5	2.0	0.9

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Characteristics of Youth Employed on NYA Work Projects*, p. 6. For survey coverage see Table XII, footnote a.

TABLE XV

TYPES OF PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE IN PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT OF YOUTH EMPLOYED ON NYA PROJECTS IN SEVEN STATES, WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 25, 1939, BY RACE AND SEX <sup>a</sup>

Type of experience	All youth studied		White		Negro	
	Num-ber	Per cent	Male per cent	Female per cent	Male per cent	Female per cent
All types.....	9,184	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Farm workers.....	1,965	21.4	36.0	1.6	22.2	2.3
Laborers (other than farm)...	1,084	11.8	19.2	—	17.0	1.5
Other unskilled jobs.....	930	10.1	14.0	2.1	25.8	2.3
Domestics, private family....	1,768	19.3	0.2	40.3	6.5	73.1
Domestics, hotels, restaurants.	601	6.5	2.9	11.7	10.2	7.4
Factory operatives.....	1,059	11.5	9.9	17.5	5.8	4.8
Craft apprentices and helpers.	377	4.1	7.3	—	4.4	—
Store clerks.....	714	7.8	6.5	12.6	3.5	1.3
Stenographers, typists.....	170	1.9	0.3	4.9	0.7	0.8
Other office workers.....	389	4.2	2.5	8.0	1.3	3.8
School teachers.....	23	0.2	—	0.4	0.3	1.5
Other professional and semi-professional workers.....	43	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.4
Miscellaneous, not elsewhere classified.....	61	0.7	0.7	0.4	2.0	0.8

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Characteristics of Youth Employed on NYA Work Projects*, p. 7. For survey coverage see Table XII, footnote a.

TABLE XVI

NUMBER OF YOUTH EMPLOYED ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL WORK PROGRAM, UNITED STATES AND TERRITORIES, MARCH 1940, BY TYPE OF PROJECT <sup>a</sup>

Type of project	Projects		Youth employed	
	Number	Per cent	Male	Female
All types.....	325,560	100.0	183,519	142,041
Highway, road, and street.....	13,656	4.2	13,611	45
Improvement of grounds of public buildings..	14,368	4.4	14,085	283
Administrative buildings.....	2,209	0.7	2,202	7
Charitable, medical, mental buildings.....	1,097	0.3	1,067	30
Educational buildings.....	16,222	5.0	15,987	235
Agricultural buildings.....	484	0.1	483	1
Social and recreational buildings.....	7,152	2.2	7,109	43
Youth centers.....	2,268	0.7	2,221	47
Airport buildings and facilities.....	492	0.1	489	3
Bridges.....	767	0.2	767	—
Recreational facilities not buildings.....	25,537	7.8	25,310	227
Other buildings and facilities.....	3,917	1.2	3,864	53
Conservation, irrigation, flood control.....	6,578	2.0	6,482	96
Water and sanitation.....	1,380	0.4	1,379	1
Clerical assistance and service projects.....	72,450	22.3	15,579	56,871
Research and surveys.....	314	0.1	190	124
Public health and hospital work.....	9,477	2.9	1,787	7,690
Museum work, exhibits, etc.....	840	0.3	282	558
Library service and book repair.....	6,489	2.0	700	5,789
Arts and crafts, music, drama, writing.....	5,307	1.6	2,710	2,597
Recreational leadership.....	13,924	4.3	7,659	6,265
Workshops.....	37,000	11.4	34,714	2,286
Sewing.....	20,090	6.2	154	19,936
Miscellaneous production.....	2,847	0.9	2,060	787
Resident projects				
Homemaking.....	10,545	3.2	225	10,320
Workshops.....	3,153	1.0	3,096	57
Agricultural training.....	871	0.3	871	—
Other.....	17,624	5.4	12,601	5,023
Nursery school assistance.....	4,869	1.5	189	4,680
School lunch assistance.....	6,081	1.9	230	5,851
Homemaking.....	10,966	3.4	461	10,505
Projects not elsewhere classified.....	6,586	2.0	4,955	1,631

<sup>a</sup> Data from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.



TABLE XVII

NUMBER OF YOUTH EMPLOYED ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL WORK PROGRAM, UNITED STATES AND TERRITORIES, OCTOBER 1940, BY TYPE OF PROJECT <sup>a</sup>

Type of project	Projects		Youth employed	
	Number	Per cent	Male	Female
All types.....	223,949	100.0	129,917	94,032
Roads, streets, and bridges.....	7,664	3.4	7,604	60
Improvements of grounds around public buildings.....	6,037	2.7	5,947	90
Building construction, repair and remodeling.....	26,064	11.6	25,881	183
Recreational facilities other than buildings....	15,343	6.9	15,240	103
Conservation, irrigation, and flood control....	4,278	1.9	4,230	48
Water and sanitation.....	661	0.3	659	2
Workshops and other production projects....	58,582	26.2	38,611	19,971
Resident projects				
Full time.....	20,604	9.2	15,680	4,924
Part time.....	9,319	4.1	1,485	7,834
Full and part time.....	1,063	0.5	1	1,062
Clerical assistance.....	40,302	18.0	7,604	32,698
Research, statistical and survey assistance....	235	0.1	131	104
Public health and hospital assistance.....	9,086	4.1	1,244	7,842
Library service.....	3,566	1.6	438	3,128
Arts and crafts.....	4,127	1.8	2,086	2,041
Recreational assistance.....	6,265	2.8	2,640	3,625
Nursery school assistance.....	1,748	0.8	70	1,678
School lunch assistance.....	1,557	0.7	69	1,488
Home service.....	7,448	3.3	297	7,151

<sup>a</sup> Data from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF YOUTH EMPLOYED ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL WORK PROGRAM, UNITED STATES AND TERRITORIES, AT SELECTED PERIODS, BY TYPE OF PROJECT<sup>a</sup>

Type of project	Average, year ending June 30, 1940	August 1939	October 1939	January 1940	March 1940	June 1940	August 1940
All types.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Construction.....	28.0	29.1	28.8	28.2	27.1	26.7	25.4
Roads, streets and bridges.....	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.4	4.7	3.6
Improvement of grounds.....	4.7	4.8	4.3	4.6	4.4	4.6	3.2
Building construction.....	10.6	10.9	11.3	10.8	10.4	10.0	12.0
Recreational facilities.....	8.1	8.6	8.4	8.1	7.9	7.4	6.6
Conservation and sanitation.....	2.3	2.0	2.2	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.3
Conservation.....	2.0	1.8	1.8	2.2	2.0	2.1	1.9
Water and sanitation.....	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Workshops.....	28.7	29.6	29.6	28.5	28.3	29.0	35.9
Workshops.....	18.3	18.3	18.0	18.9	18.4	17.8	24.1
Resident projects.....	10.4	11.3	11.6	9.6	9.9	11.2	11.8
Clerical and semiprofessional.....	32.8	31.6	32.2	32.5	33.5	33.8	31.8
Clerical assistance.....	21.9	20.4	21.6	21.9	22.3	22.6	19.8
Research.....	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3
Public health.....	2.9	2.6	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	3.9
Library.....	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.9	2.0	1.8	1.7
Arts and crafts.....	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.9
Recreational leadership.....	4.3	5.0	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.2
School and home service.....	6.3	5.5	5.5	6.4	6.7	6.2	4.6
Nursery school assistance.....	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.0
School lunch assistance.....	1.3	0.2	0.8	1.5	1.8	1.2	0.3
Home service.....	3.4	3.5	3.1	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.3
Projects not elsewhere classified.....	1.9	2.2	1.7	1.8	2.0	1.8	—

<sup>a</sup> Data from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

TABLE XIX  
AVERAGE MONTHLY EARNINGS ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL WORK PROGRAM, FEBRUARY 1940, BY STATES AND TERRITORIES<sup>a</sup>

Wage region	Average monthly earnings in states and territories					
	Under \$10	\$10 to \$12	\$12 to \$15	\$15 to \$18	\$18 to \$20	\$20 and over
I			Arizona Idaho Nebraska Nevada North Dakota South Dakota Washington Wyoming	California Colorado Connecticut Illinois Indiana Iowa Maine Massachusetts Michigan Minnesota Montana New Hampshire New Jersey New Mexico New York Ohio Oregon Pennsylvania Rhode Island Utah Wisconsin Vermont		New York City

TABLE XIX—Continued

Wage region	Average monthly earnings in states and territories					
	Under \$10	\$10 to \$12	\$12 to \$15	\$15 to \$18	\$18 to \$20	\$20 and over
II			Delaware Kansas Kentucky Maryland Missouri North Carolina Oklahoma Virginia West Virginia	District of Columbia		
III	Puerto Rico	Alabama Arkansas Florida Georgia Mississippi South Carolina Tennessee	Louisiana Texas			

<sup>a</sup> Data from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

## YOUTH WORK PROGRAMS

TABLE XX  
TOTAL AND AVERAGE EARNINGS OF YOUTH AND AVERAGE HOURS WORKED ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL WORK PROGRAM,  
UNITED STATES AND TERRITORIES, OCTOBER 1940<sup>a</sup>

State or territory	Youth employed on out-of-school work program							
	All projects		Resident projects		Nonresident projects			
	Total earnings	Average monthly earnings	Total earnings	Average monthly earnings	Total earnings	Average monthly earnings	Average hours worked	Average hourly earnings
All states and territories.....	\$3,711,823	\$16.57	\$691,894	\$22.33	\$3,019,929	\$15.65	59.5	\$ .26
Alabama.....	86,780	14.99	26,404	21.29	60,376	13.28	67.6	.20
Arizona.....	11,183	16.11	1,731	24.04	9,452	15.20	59.7	.25
Arkansas.....	49,392	12.90	9,755	18.30	39,637	12.03	66.6	.18
California.....	153,926	15.33	5,841	20.21	148,085	15.18	49.6	.31
Colorado.....	38,707	15.78	6,039	20.40	32,668	15.15	46.5	.33
Connecticut.....	37,429	16.24	2,470	23.30	34,959	15.90	52.5	.30
Delaware.....	8,064	14.85	—	—	8,064	14.85	48.6	.31
District of Columbia.....	16,600	15.51	—	—	16,600	15.51	51.5	.30
Florida.....	43,335	14.02	11,601	26.49	31,734	11.96	65.1	.18
Georgia.....	94,145	16.75	50,866	23.34	43,279	12.57	62.6	.20
Idaho.....	17,764	21.17	13,000	26.69	4,764	13.53	49.7	.27
Illinois.....	232,920	18.02	13,454	27.74	219,466	17.64	68.9	.26
Indiana.....	76,543	15.70	6,139	27.16	70,404	15.14	50.0	.30
Iowa.....	88,783	14.92	1,977	23.82	86,806	14.80	54.0	.27
Kansas.....	63,530	15.70	24,879	18.48	38,651	14.32	55.5	.26





## YOUTH WORK PROGRAMS

TABLE XX—Continued

State or territory	Youth employed on out-of-school work program							
	All projects		Resident projects		Nonresident projects			
	Total earnings	Average monthly earnings	Total earnings	Average monthly earnings	Total earnings	Average monthly earnings	Average hours worked	Average hourly earnings
Oklahoma.....	97,726	17.42	55,851	21.27	41,875	14.04	69.0	.20
Oregon.....	11,154	18.71	3,814	25.95	7,340	16.35	49.3	.33
Pennsylvania.....	306,726	17.70	14,952	26.84	291,774	17.39	57.3	.30
Rhode Island.....	17,183	14.85	1,576	22.51	15,607	14.36	36.7	.39
South Carolina.....	60,679	14.57	37,482	15.88	23,197	12.86	57.6	.22
South Dakota.....	22,042	17.30	10,515	20.26	11,527	15.27	50.5	.30
Tennessee.....	84,379	14.05	21,593	24.13	62,786	12.29	65.3	.19
Texas.....	196,704	15.96	66,176	21.29	130,528	14.16	69.9	.20
Utah.....	13,290	15.07	4,088	15.78	9,202	14.77	46.2	.32
Vermont.....	6,649	17.41	—	—	6,649	17.41	57.9	.30
Virginia.....	81,625	15.62	15,488	25.14	66,137	14.35	70.6	.20
Washington.....	42,185	16.50	3,058	20.95	39,127	16.23	55.7	.29
West Virginia.....	52,506	18.85	21,372	27.61	31,134	15.47	60.8	.25
Wisconsin.....	112,887	17.29	11,457	24.75	101,430	16.72	41.4	.40
Wyoming.....	7,060	15.58	—	—	7,060	15.58	57.2	.27
Puerto Rico.....	38,684	10.67	5,831	21.52	32,853	9.79	65.0	.15
Virgin Islands.....	833	7.31	—	—	833	7.31	59.2	.12

\* Data from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

TABLE XXI  
AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL WORK PROGRAM, NONRESIDENT PROJECTS,  
MARCH 1940, BY WAGE REGION AND STATE <sup>a</sup>

Wage region	Average hourly earnings in states					
	40 cents and over	35-39 cents	30-34 cents	25-29 cents	20-24 cents	Under 20 cents
I	Minnesota Montana	Connecticut Nevada New York Pennsylvania Rhode Island Vermont Wisconsin New Jersey	California Colorado Illinois Massachusetts Michigan New Mexico Ohio Oregon South Dakota Utah Washington	Arizona Indiana Iowa Maine Nebraska New Hampshire North Dakota Wyoming	Idaho	
II			Delaware District of Columbia Maryland West Virginia	Kansas Missouri Oklahoma	Kentucky North Carolina Virginia	
III				Louisiana Texas	Alabama Georgia Mississippi	Arkansas Florida South Carolina Tennessee

<sup>a</sup> Based on statement of wage regions, *Administrative Order No. 5* (Washington: National Youth Administration, 1939), p. 4, mimeo., and on data from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.

TABLE XXII

AVERAGE HOURLY ENTRANCE RATES OF 192,648 ADULT MALE COMMON LABORERS IN  
20 INDUSTRIES, JULY 1939, BY REGION AND STATE <sup>a</sup>  
(In cents)

Region and state	Average hourly entrance rate	Region and state	Average hourly entrance rate
UNITED STATES.....	49.9	NORTH AND WEST— <i>Cont.</i>	
NORTH AND WEST.....	55.7	Pennsylvania.....	55.3
California.....	57.5	Rhode Island.....	55.9
Colorado.....	58.0	South Dakota.....	47.8
Connecticut.....	54.4	Utah.....	47.7
Delaware.....	45.2	Vermont.....	42.5
District of Columbia.....	51.1	Washington.....	62.9
Idaho.....	56.1	West Virginia.....	54.6
Illinois.....	58.1	Wisconsin.....	52.3
Indiana.....	56.6	Wyoming.....	54.9
Iowa.....	53.6	SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST.....	33.7
Kansas.....	51.3	Alabama.....	37.0
Maine.....	45.5	Arizona.....	44.9
Maryland.....	49.2	Arkansas.....	30.2
Massachusetts.....	53.4	Florida.....	28.3
Michigan.....	55.1	Georgia.....	26.2
Minnesota.....	58.0	Kentucky.....	46.3
Missouri.....	55.6	Louisiana.....	33.3
Montana.....	60.4	Mississippi.....	32.2
Nebraska.....	49.5	New Mexico.....	39.6
Nevada.....	<sup>b</sup>	North Carolina.....	27.5
New Hampshire.....	47.7	Oklahoma.....	41.7
New Jersey.....	55.6	South Carolina.....	26.7
New York.....	54.8	Tennessee.....	32.2
North Dakota.....	<sup>b</sup>	Texas.....	39.8
Ohio.....	57.6	Virginia.....	33.3
Oregon.....	58.6		

<sup>a</sup> Data from Bureau of Labor Statistics, Serial No. R. 1048, *Entrance Rates of Common Laborers: July 1939* (Washington: U. S. Department of Labor, 1940), Table 2, p. 4.

<sup>b</sup> No average given due to small coverage.

TABLE XXIII

AVERAGE HOURLY ENTRANCE RATES OF ADULT MALE COMMON LABORERS, JULY 1939,  
BY INDUSTRY AND REGION <sup>a</sup>  
(In cents)

Industries	United States	North and West	South and Southwest
All 20 industries.....	49.9	55.7	33.7
Manufacturing.....	48.7	54.7	33.1
Automobile parts.....	55.8	55.8	—
Bricks, tile, terra cotta.....	43.5	47.7	28.3
Cement.....	52.2	56.3	40.3
Chemicals.....	52.7	59.0	38.1
Fertilizers.....	36.2	46.5	29.6
Foundry and machine shop products.....	49.6	51.0	34.2
Glass.....	51.8	52.9	40.8
Iron and steel.....	58.3	60.0	44.3
Leather.....	47.3	49.0	37.1
Lumber (saw-mills).....	37.4	53.2	25.9
Meat-packing.....	57.2	58.6	43.3
Paints and varnishes.....	51.7	53.7	34.2
Paper and pulp.....	47.1	50.5	39.1
Petroleum refining.....	64.2	68.0	57.7
Rubber tires and inner tubes.....	<sup>b</sup>	<sup>b</sup>	—
Soap.....	55.2	<sup>c</sup>	<sup>c</sup>
Public utilities.....	48.5	51.3	36.1
Electric light and power.....	47.7	50.1	38.4
Electric street railway and city motorbus, operation and maintenance.....	49.9	52.4	32.1
Manufactured and natural gas.....	47.7	51.3	36.2
Building construction.....	60.1	67.3	37.7

<sup>a</sup> Data from Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Entrance Rates of Common Laborers*, Table 6, p. 13.

<sup>b</sup> So few of the common laborers employed in this industry work at entrance rates that the average of 45.6 cents does not reflect the average earnings of common laborers in the industry.

<sup>c</sup> Regional figures not given, in order not to disclose plant identity.



## YOUTH WORK PROGRAMS

TABLE XXIV  
AVERAGE HOURLY AND WEEKLY EARNINGS OF LEARNERS AND BEGINNERS  
IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES<sup>a</sup>

Industry and occupation	Year for which data is available	Average hourly earnings (in cents)	Average number of hours	Average weekly earnings
Boot and shoe.....	1939 (first quarter)			
Unskilled				
Male learners.....		31.6	38.9	\$12.30
Female learners.....		26.1	37.2	9.70
Textile dyeing and finishing.....	1938			
Semiskilled				
Male apprentices.....		87.1	—	—
Unskilled				
Male helpers.....				
North.....		50.2	—	—
South.....		38.9	—	—
Male learners				
North.....		43.5	—	—
South.....		31.3	—	—
Wood household furniture.....	Oct. 1937			
Semiskilled				
Male apprentices.....		41.2	—	—
Unskilled				
Male beginners				
North.....		37.0	—	—
South.....		25.6	—	—
Male helpers				
North.....		39.9	—	—
South.....		27.6	—	—
Wood office furniture.....	Oct. 1937			
Unskilled				
Male helpers (woodworking, machine operating).....		32.5	—	—
Cigar industry.....	March 1936			
Learners and apprentices				
Males.....		36.0	—	—
Females.....		18.4	—	—
Full-fashioned hosiery.....	1938			
Unskilled				
Male learners and apprentices				
North.....		49.5	39.1	18.95
South.....		27.5	40.8	11.24
Female learners and apprentices				
North.....		28.1	37.8	10.63
South.....		23.7	38.9	9.21
Electrical manufacturing industry....	Aug. 1939			
Semiskilled				
Male apprentices.....		54.5	40.9	22.28
Unskilled learners				
Males.....		50.5	39.3	19.84
Females.....		36.9	37.6	13.88

<sup>a</sup> Data from reports of hearings for the various industries conducted before Wage and Hour Division and Division of Public Contracts, U. S. Department of Labor.

TABLE XXV  
AVERAGE COMPENSATION PER HOUR DURING APPRENTICE TRAINING IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES <sup>a</sup>

Industry	Number of companies	First year		Second year		Third year		Fourth year	
		First six months	Second six months	First six months	Second six months	First six months	Second six months	First six months	Second six months
All industries.....	153	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Agricultural implements.....	4	\$.338	\$.364	\$.405	\$.436	\$.481	\$.513	\$.527	\$.575
Automobiles and parts.....	10	.354	.386	.426	.454	.495	.528	.559	.586
Electrical manufacturing.....	23	.356	.384	.416	.447	.474	.512	.538	.577
Iron and steel.....	7	.408	.412	.476	.481	.554	.557	.635	.653
Machines and machine tools.....	66	.309	.333	.371	.398	.440	.466	.517	.548
Metal products, other.....	43	.335	.360	.415	.437	.491	.518	.575	.602
<i>Weighted average</i> .....	—	.332	.356	.399	.425	.472	.497	.543	.574

<sup>a</sup> Data from *Training for Industry*, Study No. 237 (New York: National Industrial Conference Board, 1937), p. 27.

TABLE XXVI

NUMBER OF YOUTH EMPLOYED ON NYA OUT-OF-SCHOOL WORK PROGRAM, UNITED STATES AND TERRITORIES, MAY 20, 1940, BY SEX AND OCCUPATIONAL FIELD<sup>a</sup>

Occupational field	Number of youth employed		
	Total	Boys	Girls
All occupational fields.....	279,664	159,369	120,295
Construction and shop workers.....	90,067	80,001	2,066
Asphalt workers.....	260	260	—
Blacksmiths.....	543	543	—
Blasters.....	15	15	—
Bricklayers and structural tile layers.....	2,691	2,691	—
Calkers, pipe layers, and coverers.....	911	911	—
Carpenters—finish.....	5,812	5,812	—
Carpenters—rough.....	14,118	14,118	—
Concrete workers and cement finishers.....	5,943	5,943	—
Electricians.....	1,372	1,372	—
Junior foremen—construction.....	1,187	1,187	—
Lathers and plasterers.....	556	556	—
Operators—building and construction equipment.....	528	528	—
Painters, glazers, and paperhangers.....	5,142	5,125	17
Plumbers and fitters.....	1,305	1,305	—
Roofers.....	923	920	3
Sawyers—lumber.....	277	277	—
Sheet metal workers.....	1,682	1,682	—
Stone cutters, carvers, and setters.....	2,865	2,865	—
Stonemasons.....	3,387	3,387	—
Structural iron and steel workers.....	134	134	—
Teamsters.....	220	220	—
Tile setters.....	290	290	—
Truck, tractor, and grader drivers.....	1,597	1,597	—
Other construction workers.....	5,269	5,269	—
Cabinet makers and wood workers.....	10,455	10,409	46
Cobblers and shoe repair men.....	173	171	2
Enamel workers.....	95	95	—
Furniture repair workers.....	3,786	3,675	111
Furniture finishers.....	2,988	2,802	186
Handicraft workers not elsewhere classified.....	2,057	815	1,242
Junior foremen—workshops.....	1,014	960	54
Lathe operators—wood.....	1,458	1,454	4
Lathe operators—metal.....	589	589	—
Machinists and tool makers.....	825	825	—
Mechanics—automotive.....	3,783	3,783	—
Mechanics—aviation.....	970	954	16
Mechanics—radio and electrical apparatus.....	762	762	—
Mechanics—other.....	959	959	—
Molders, founders, and casters.....	143	143	—
Pattern and model makers—wood.....	359	329	30
Potters, brick and clay products workers.....	250	153	97
Upholsterers.....	550	326	224
Other shop workers.....	1,824	1,790	34

TABLE XXVI—*Continued*

Occupational field	Number of youth employed		
	Total	Boys	Girls
Production workers . . . . .	32,475	3,346	29,129
Agricultural and conservation workers . . . . .	24,770	24,008	762
Clerical and service workers . . . . .	96,994	19,265	77,729
Professional, semiprofessional, and technical unskilled labor . . . . .	17,970	16,468	1,492

\* Data from Division of Finance and Statistics, NYA.



---

# LIST OF TABLES IN THE TEXT

---

TABLE	PAGE
1. Youth on Government Work Programs, May 1940.....	26
2. Per Capita Income of Nonrelief and Relief Families, by Size of Family, 1935-36.....	30
3. Number of Nonrelief Families, by Size and Income Level, 1935-36.....	31
4. Number and Percentage of Persons under 16 and between 16 and 24 Years of Age in Urban Families of Given Economic Status, 1935-36.....	32
5. Number of Pupils Enrolled in Specified Kinds of Federally Aided Vocational Schools, by Type of Class, School Year Ended June 30, 1939.....	34
6. Distribution of Youth Employed on NYA Out-of-School Projects, January 1940, According to Size of Largest Community in County.....	46
7. Occupational Distribution of Girls on NYA Out-of-School Projects, January 1940, Placements of Girls by Junior Placement Divisions of Public Employment Offices, Fiscal Year 1939-40, and Girls Gainfully Employed in 1930.....	53
8. Selected Major Accomplishments of NYA Work Projects in the Field of Public Building and Public Improvement, Fiscal Year 1939-40.....	66
9. Recreational Structures and Facilities Built or Improved by NYA, Fiscal Year 1939-40.....	68
10. Some NYA Accomplishments in Conservation and Sanitation, Fiscal Year 1939-40.....	69
11. Articles Produced on NYA Workshop, Sewing, and Other Projects, Fiscal Year 1939-40.....	80



## TABLE

## PAGE

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 12. Weekly Salary Received on Previous "Best Job" of Youth of Both Sexes and All Races on NYA Rolls in New York State, July-December 1936.....    | 89 |
| 13. Weekly Working Hours in "Best Job" Held by Youth of Both Sexes and All Races before NYA Experience in New York State, July-December 1936..... | 90 |
| 14. Dependency of Others on NYA Youth of Both Sexes and All Races, New York State, 1936, as Reported by the Young People.....                     | 91 |
| 15. Comparison of Dependency of Others on White NYA Youth of Both Sexes, New York State, According to NYA Status, December 3, 1936.....           | 91 |
| 16. White NYA Youth of Both Sexes, New York State, 1936, Distributed According to Per Cent of Earnings Contributed to Family Income.....          | 92 |

---

# LIST OF TABLES IN THE APPENDIX

---

TABLE

PAGE

I. Estimated Number of Youth in the United States in Each Unemployment Class, by Sex and Age, During Week of November 14-20, 1937.....	157
II. Number of Certified Youth Awaiting Assignment to NYA Out-of-School Work Program, United States and Territories, September 30, 1940.....	158
III. Age Distribution of Job Seekers Registered at Public Employment Offices, April 1940.....	159
IV. Estimated Gross Annual Entrance of Youth into the Labor Market, in the United States, by Age and Sex.....	160
V. Gainfully Occupied Youth in the United States, 1930, by Sex, Age, and Race.....	161
VI. Distribution of the Estimated Population 15-24 Years of Age, Inclusive, by Sex, Age, and Employment Status, November 1937.....	162
VII. Estimated Population under 25 Years of Age, 1940-60, by Age and Sex.....	163
VIII. Private Employment in Families of NYA Youth of Both Sexes and All Races, New York State, 1936.....	163
IX. Emergency Employment in Families of NYA Youth of Both Sexes and All Races, New York State, 1936.....	164
X. Number in Family as Reported by NYA Youth of Both Sexes and All Races, New York State, 1936.....	164
XI. Youth on NYA Out-of-School Projects in March 1940 as Percentages of the Youth Population Reported in the 1930 Census, by Region and State.....	165

## TABLE

## PAGE

XII. Age Distribution of Youth Employed on NYA Work Projects in Seven States, Week Ending February 25, 1939, by Race and Sex.....	167
XIII. Previous Education of Youth Employed on NYA Work Projects in Seven States, Week Ending February 25, 1939, by Race and Sex.....	167
XIV. Previous Work Experience of Youth Employed on NYA Work Projects in Seven States, Week Ending February 25, 1939, by Race and Sex.....	168
XV. Types of Previous Work Experience in Private Employment of Youth Employed on NYA Projects in Seven States, Week Ending February 25, 1939, by Race and Sex.....	168
XVI. Number of Youth Employed on NYA Out-of-School Work Program, United States and Territories, March 1940, by Type of Project.....	169
XVII. Number of Youth Employed on NYA Out-of-School Work Program, United States and Territories, October 1940, by Type of Project.....	170
XVIII. Percentage Distribution of Youth Employed on NYA Out-of-School Work Program, United States and Territories, at Selected Periods, by Type of Project.....	171
XIX. Average Monthly Earnings on NYA Out-of-School Work Program, February 1940, by States and Territories.....	172
XX. Total and Average Earnings of Youth and Average Hours Worked on NYA Out-of-School Work Program, United States and Territories, October 1940.....	174
XXI. Average Hourly Earnings on NYA Out-of-School Work Program, Nonresident Projects, March 1940, by Wage Region and State.....	177
XXII. Average Hourly Entrance Rates of 192,648 Adult Male Common Laborers in 20 Industries, July 1939, by Region and State.....	178
XXIII. Average Hourly Entrance Rates of Adult Male Common Laborers, July 1939, by Industry and Region.....	179

TABLE	PAGE
XXIV. Average Hourly and Weekly Earnings of Learners and Beginners in Selected Industries. ....	180
XXV. Average Compensation per Hour During Apprentice Training in Selected Industries. ....	181
XXVI. Number of Youth Employed on NYA Out-of-School Work Program, United States and Territories, May 20, 1940, by Sex and Occupational Field. ....	182



---

# INDEX

---

- Accident prevention. *See* Safety
- Adams, Thomas S., 16
- Administration of current programs, 136-45, 153
- Advisory Committee on Education, 12, 35, 140-41, 147
- Advisory committees, 105-6, 113, 115
- Age limits, NYA, 3, 19
- Allotment of NYA funds to states, 137.
- American Council on Education, vi
- American Federation of Labor, viii, 104, 110-15
- American Youth Commission, 1, 2, 25, 35, 82, 103, 119-20, 133, 136, 149-50
- Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 13
- Apprenticeship training, 110, 113
- Assignment to work projects, 55-56
- Astoria, Long Island, 106
- Atlanta, Ga., 106
- Beard, William, 79
- Bell, Howard M., 13, 64
- Biagi, Bruno, 135
- Boy Scouts, 102
- California, 77
- Certification of need:  
and future programs, 27  
NYA certified youth, 158
- Civilian Conservation Corps, 1, 2, 4, 9, 18, 26, 40, 41, 118, 122, 127, 128, 132, 133, 134, 140
- Civilian Conservation Corps, The*, 136
- College students:  
in NYA program, 26, 71  
in national labor service, 153
- Compulsory youth work programs, 25-26, 36, 39-44, 149-50
- Congress of Industrial Organizations, viii, 104, 108-10
- Conservation projects, 41, 66, 68, 69, 118, 169
- Consumer Expenditures in the United States*, 31
- Consumer Incomes in the United States*, 30, 31, 35, 92
- Coolidge, Calvin, 6
- Coordination of current youth programs, 144-45. *See also* Future youth work programs
- Costs of:  
all federal youth work programs, 1, 26, 128  
defense training, 121  
CCC, per capita, 128, 132, 134  
NYA out-of-school program, per capita, 128, 132, 134  
WPA youth employment, per capita, 128, 134
- Create the Wealth*, 79
- Current History Magazine*, 116
- Current youth work programs:  
and national defense, 19-20, 114, 118-26, 135, 151  
character, 17-20  
coordination, 144-45  
costs, 127-36  
expenditures, 128, 132



- Current youth work programs—*continued*  
 administrative adjustment, 153  
 history, 9-10  
 organization and administration, 136, 144-45  
 relief content, 15-17, 18  
 underlying concepts, 10-17  
 youth in need of, 26-39  
 youth served, 1, 18, 26, 130  
*See also* Employment
- David, Paul T., vi
- Decentralization, 138-39
- Defense training, 121-23. *See also* National defense
- Democratic citizenship and youth work programs, 147-48
- Disadvantaged Youth on the Labor Market*, 28
- District of Columbia, 76, 87, 111
- Douglass, Harl R., 13
- Economic Status of Urban Families and Children*, 32
- Education and Economic Well-Being in American Democracy*, 13
- Educational Policies Commission, 13
- Educational-vocational aspects, public youth programs, 12-15
- Edwards, Newton, 35
- Efficiency vs. training, 58-60
- Employability, 60-61
- Employer groups. *See* National Association of Manufacturers; U. S. Chamber of Commerce
- Employment on current youth work programs:  
 by all federal programs, 1, 26, 130  
 by CCC, 26  
 by NYA out-of-school program, 3, 45, 68, 69, 165, 169, 170, 171, 182  
 by WPA (youth) 1, 4, 9, 26, 144  
 duration, 92-93  
 policies, 84-98  
 shifts due to defense training, 123  
*See also* Girls on work projects
- Employment Service Division. *See* U. S. Employment Service
- Enumerative Check Census of Unemployment, 27, 157, 162
- Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth*, 35
- Equalization of opportunities:  
 as basis for youth work programs, 21  
 economic, 17  
 educational, 17, 18, 35, 125-26, 131
- Expenditures for:  
 all federal youth work programs, 128, 132  
 all purposes (federal government), 129  
 appropriations for defense training, 100, 122  
 CCC junior enrollees, 127  
 NYA, 1, 3, 26, 127  
 public school systems, 130-31  
 vocational education, 131
- Falk, I. S., 32
- Family allowances, 96, 135
- Federal Emergency Relief Administration. *See* Work Projects Administration
- Farr, Maude, 131
- Federal contributions to:  
 land-grant colleges, 131  
 public schools, proposed, 131  
 public works, 69-70, 129  
 relief, 129, 130  
 vocational education, 131  
 youth work programs, 130
- Federal Security Agency, 153
- Fisher, Evelyn, viii
- Fortune*, 11
- 4-H Clubs, 102
- Future youth work programs:  
 administrative adjustment, 153  
 and democratic citizenship, 147-48  
 and general education, 148-49, 152-53  
 and social advancement, 147-48  
 criteria for determining scope, 27-35  
 future policies, 20-24  
 standards for planning, 49-72
- General education and youth work programs, 18, 148-49, 152-53

- Girl Scouts, 102
- Girls on work projects, 53-54, 151. *See also* Youth on NYA projects (sex)
- Goldschmidt, P., 135
- Greenbelt, Md., 111
- Haring, Douglas G., 52, 87, 90, 91
- Health programs, 41, 98-101, 151
- Hoffner, Claire, 135
- Hours worked:
  - on CCC, 132
  - on NYA, 60, 84, 86, 87, 132, 174-76
- How Fare American Youth?*, 13
- Improvement of youth work programs, 150-51
- Income distribution, 15-17, 21, 30-33, 35, 45, 47, 92-93, 95
- In-service training, 151
- Insufficient family income and youth work programs, 29-33
- Intercity Differences in Costs of Living, 1935*, 92
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. *See* American Federation of Labor
- International Labor Office (Geneva, Switzerland), vi
- International Labor Review*, 135
- Inventory of Job Seekers at Public Employment Offices, 1940*, An, 28
- Junior placement. *See* Placement; U. S. Employment Service
- Kerr, Peyton, 79
- Labor market, annual entrance into, 33, 160
- Labor Problems*, 16
- Labor service. *See* Compulsory youth work programs; National labor and citizenship training service
- Labor's Progress and Some Basic Labor Problems*, 29
- Land-grant colleges, 131
- Lewis, John L., 108-9. *See also* Congress of Industrial Organizations
- Lindley, Betty and Ernest K., 102
- Local communities and youth work programs, 50, 54-55, 57, 68, 105-6, 117, 128, 137
- Lorwin, Lewis L., vi, 116
- Martin, John L., 35
- Martin, Prestonia, 146
- Matching Youth and Jobs*, 64
- Melvin, Bruce L., 35
- Michigan, 64
- Military training, 39, 41, 42
- Millis, Harry A., 29
- Montgomery, Royal E., 29
- Monthly Labor Review*, 79
- Murray, Alan Robert, viii
- National Association of Manufacturers, viii, 104, 107-8
- National defense, 19-20, 43, 114, 118-26, 135, 151. *See also* Defense training
- National Health Survey, 32
- National labor and citizenship training service, 151-53
- National Resources Committee, 30, 31, 35, 71
- National youth service administration, 113, 153
- Negroes, 47, 161, 167, 168
- New Deal for Youth, A*, 102
- New York state, 52, 89-92, 126
- Next Steps in National Policy for Youth*, 103
- Objectives, NYA, 19-20
- Occupational adjustment, 34, 40, 61
- Occupational outlook service, 61
- Organization of current youth work programs, 136, 144-45
- Out-of-school program, NYA:
  - administration, 55, 57, 84, 87, 136-39
  - aims and methods, 18-20
  - cosponsors' contributions, 127
  - employment policy, 84-98
  - health program, 98-101
  - labor relations, 105-17
  - production for use, 79-83
  - recreation program, 101-3

Out-of-school program, NYA—*continued*  
 safety program, 96-98  
 selective principles, 44-48  
 standards for selecting projects, 51-55  
 working standards, 96-98  
 vocational guidance and placement, 62-64  
 vocational training, 54-61

*See also* Advisory committees; Assignment to projects; Certification of need; Conservation projects; Costs; Defense training; Employment; Expenditures; Girls on work projects; Hours; Local communities; National defense; Negroes; Public works projects; Recreational facilities projects; "Related training"; Rural youth; Supervision; Wages; Youth on NYA projects

Part-time work, 60

Payne, Stanley L., 28

*Personnel Record Study* (New York State Youth Administration), 52, 89, 90, 91

Placement:

of girls by public employment offices, 53

of juniors, 62-64

of persons trained for defense industries, 121

Planning boards, 70-72

Poverty and youth work programs, 15-17, 29-33

President's Advisory Committee on Education. *See* Advisory Committee on Education

President's Committee on Vocational Education. *See* Advisory Committee on Education

Private work camps, 2

Production for use, 79-83, 151. *See also* Self-help movement

*A Program of Action for American Youth*, 1, 25, 82

*Prohibiting Poverty*, 146

Projects. *See* Assignment; Conservation projects; Employment; Girls;

National defense; Negroes; Out-of-school program; Production for use; Public works projects; Recreational facilities projects; Social utility; Supervision; Vocational education; Wages; Work experience

Public school system:

enrollments, 130

expenditures, 130-31

Public works projects, 49, 66, 67-72

Rainey, Homer P., 13

Recreation programs, 41, 101-3, 153

Recreational facilities projects, 66, 67, 68, 101

"Related training," 41, 64-65, 141-42, 151, 153

Relief content, 15-17, 18

Richmond, Va., 76

Roosevelt, Franklin D., 16

Rural youth, 35, 45-46

*Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects*, 35

Student work projects, NYA, 1, 4, 18, 26, 109, 132

Safety, 96-98, 151

Sanders, Barkev, 32

*Secondary Education for Youth in Modern America*, 13

"Self-Help Cooperatives 1931-39," 79

Self-help movement, 73-79. *See also* Production for use

Smith, Elna N., 35

Social reform and youth work programs, 15-17, 19, 147-48

Social Security Board, 28, 33. *See also* U. S. Employment Service

Social utility of projects, 49, 51-53, 59-60

States. Distribution by state is shown in tables on pp. 158-59, 165-66, 172-73, 174-76, 177, 178. Special information on some states is indexed under the state name.

Stecker, Margaret L., 92

Sumner, Helen L., 16

Supervision, 56-58, 151

- Survey of Current Business*, 35
- Swerdlow, Irving, viii
- Texas, 99
- U. S. Chamber of Commerce, viii, 107-8
- U. S. Department of Agriculture, 101
- U. S. Department of Labor, viii, 16, 35, 113, 151
- U. S. Employment Service, viii, 28, 62-64, 112, 153
- U. S. Office of Education, viii, 33, 65, 113, 121, 123, 141-43, 144, 153
- U. S. Public Health Service, 32, 100, 151
- Universal youth work programs, 25-26, 36-39, 42, 151-53
- Urban youth, 32, 35
- Urban Youth: Their Characteristics and Economic Problems*, 35
- Vocational Education and the Future of Workers, Old and Young*, 33, 34
- Vocational education:
- by industry, 34-35
  - elements, 14
  - expenditures for, 131
  - federal contributions to, 131
  - in future programs, 33-35, 124-25, 151, 152-53
  - in NYA programs, 49, 51-54, 58-67
  - in schools, 34
  - See also* Work experience
- Vocational guidance, 34, 62-63, 154
- Voorhis, Jerry, 42
- Wages:
- in private industry, 88-93, 178, 179, 180, 181
  - on NYA out-of-school projects, 85-96, 109, 132, 172-73, 174-76, 177
  - on NYA student projects, 132
- Washington, D. C., 76
- What the High Schools Ought to Teach*, 37
- Williams, Aubrey, 51, 56, 57, 67
- Work experience, 19, 37-40, 51-54, 56-57, 151, 152. *See also* Vocational education
- Work Projects Administration, 1, 4, 9, 26, 122, 127, 128, 134, 144
- Work relief, 10-12, 18, 19, 21
- Works Progress Administration. *See* Work Projects Administration
- Wright, J. C., 33, 34
- Wubnig, Arthur, viii
- Youth, Defense, and the National Welfare*, 120
- Youth employment, 34, 37, 53, 161, 162, 180, 181. *See also* Employment; Youth on NYA projects; Youth unemployment
- Youth in Agricultural Villages*, 35
- Youth on NYA projects, characteristics:
- age, 46, 167
  - education, 47, 167
  - families, 44, 45, 90, 91, 92, 163, 164
  - previous employment, 47, 48, 89, 90, 168
  - sex, 47, 53-54, 167, 168, 169, 170, 182-83
  - size of home community, 46
  - See also* Employment on current youth work programs; Girls on work projects; Negroes; Rural youth
- Youth population, 22, 37, 122, 162, 163
- "Youth Problem," 11, 15, 21-24
- Youth security allowances, 93-96, 135
- Youth Tell Their Story*, 13
- Youth unemployment:
- age, 29, 157, 162
  - and employment relations, 2
  - and labor requirements, 2, 13
  - and population, 2, 13, 22
  - and poverty, 15-17
  - and technology, 2
  - determining scope of future programs, 27-29
  - extent, 9, 11, 27-29, 37, 132, 157
  - permanency, 11
  - sex, 157, 158-59, 162
  - See also* Employment; Youth employment; Youth on NYA projects

Photograph on jacket by the National Youth Administration

## THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

GEORGE F. ZOOK, *President*

The American Council on Education is a *council* of national educational associations; organizations having related interests; approved universities and colleges, technological schools, and private secondary schools; state departments of education; and city school systems. It is a center of cooperation and coordination whose influence has been apparent in the shaping of American educational policies as well as in the formulation of American educational practices during the past twenty years. Many leaders in American education and public life serve on the commissions and committees through which the Council operates.

Established by the Council in 1935, the American Youth Commission consists of the persons whose names appear on a front page of this publication. It operates through a staff under the supervision and control of a director responsible to the Commission.











## Date Due

[illegible]

Youth work programs; main

301.15L878y C.2



3 1262 03167 4079

301.15

L878y

C.2



